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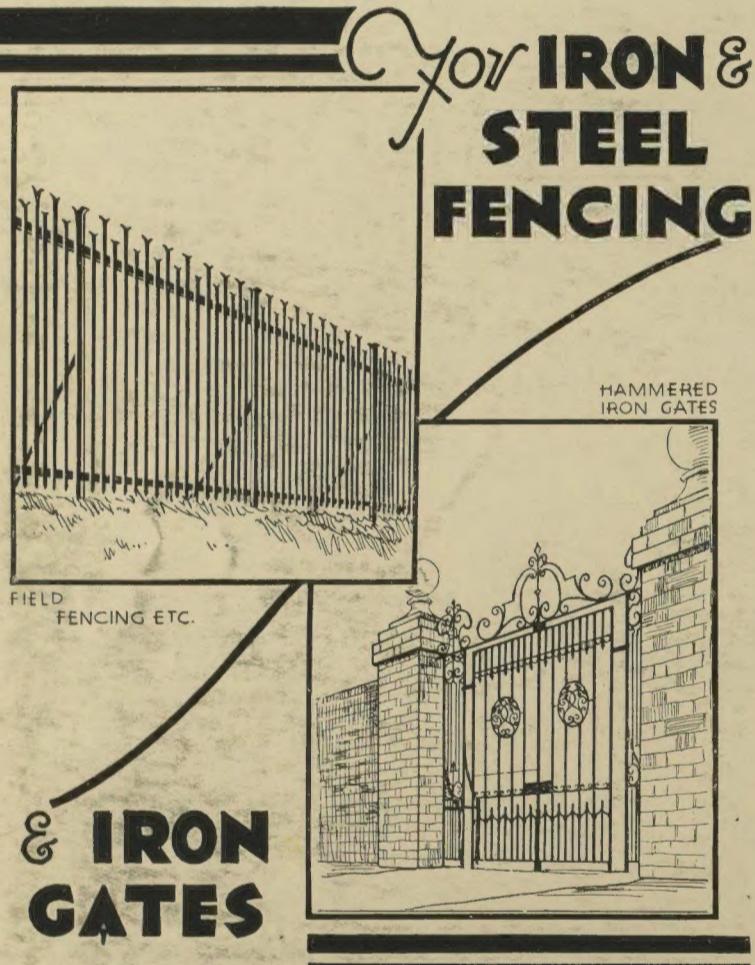
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"THE SINS OF THE FATHERS . . ."

By "L.N.D." Illustrated by LEO BATES.

The setting of this story is in the exquisite valley of the Hawkesbury River, some fifty miles from Sydney, N.S.W.



LOOKING back on an event, one is amazed at the wealth of insignificant detail with which the mind has burdened itself. For five years I have not willingly dwelt on the memory of that night; yet even now I sometimes wake sweating with the horror of it. After the first shock of the affair, Bert Davis and Wally Dowden simply scoffed at me; the doctor whom we called in, and to whom I blurted out the whole story, looked grave and advised me to slack off; all three talked glibly of hallucinations. Hallucinations! Every impression, every minute incident, every gripping fear, like the chill clasp of icy hands upon my heart, is seared into my memory. After the first passionate protestations, I was dumb against their kindly disbelief. For five years I have spoken of it to no one; now, as the anniversary of that night comes back, there awakens once more the desire to tell the story, to whose truth three might bear witness—Royal Grey, that "Other," and myself; and of the three, I alone may speak. . . .

It was a mellow autumn evening—a golden evening, when the very air seemed drunk with the season's vintage. We had struck camp for the night in a "cave" above the convict-built road that leads down to Wiseman's Ferry. Despite Roy's enthusiasm for the spot, which had persuaded us to camp there for the night instead of putting up at the Hawkesbury Inn, the projecting lip of rock scarcely merited the name of "cave." It sheltered a triangular space which was strewn with irregularly-hewn sandstone boulders that served for seats and gave a curious air of deliberate arrangement to the rude spot. The site of the cave was some five or six hundred feet above the valley; below, the waters of the Hawkesbury and the McDonnell meandered to their junction; the westering sun sent oblique golden rays across the hills—purple-black, with here and there a touch of ochre where the light struck the sandstone ridges; and in the molten silver of the rivers were mirrored every hill and cloud. Lights twinkled in the houses of the village—cheerful, homely lights; the distant sound of the ferry-bell came through the still air; all was peace; the thin sliver of the new moon dipped across the hill in a sky of tremulous jade.

Around the fire, our blankets were spread after tea, and we stretched lazily in the glow of the logs. The leaping flames illuminated the walls fitfully, and grotesque shadows danced on the roof. Wally, peacefully replete, lay on his back, puffing at his pipe; Bert's dark, eager face, with the incipient moustache of which he was inordinately proud—and Roy! God!—how clear the picture is!—the dancing flames, light and shadow playing on familiar faces, giving them a strange air of unreality; the utter peace, punctuated only by the cry of the mo-poke; beyond the light of the fire the velvet blackness of the night. A chill mist crept up from the river, and we rolled the blankets around us. This was probably the last of many tramps we would take together, for Roy and Wal had just finished their Med. Finals; and were off to work in a few weeks—Wal to an obscure country town, with "a name like a sneeze"; Roy to a partnership in a lucrative suburban practice. Bert, a newly-fledged B.E., sailed the next week to copper-mines in Papua; while I—vague dreams—hopes—such as the youthful Arts man entertains.

Roy broke the comfortable silence in which we were sunk. "You know, this cave is a relic of convict days. The Courthouse Cave it's called, because convicts from the chain-gangs used to be tried here."

"So that's the idea of those seats," Wally queried, indicating the rough-hewn rocks.

Roy nodded. "Great spot, isn't it? One of my ancestors was Resident Magistrate here for a short time. He was a real old scoundrel from all accounts—still, I've always had a bit of a weakness for the old chap. I'm called after him. Queer sort of godfather; but the family presented me with the name before all the stuff came to light about the old chap. The Mater's never ceased to moan about it; she feels I'm compromised for life; but, privately, I think the Pater's a bit amused. He probably suffered quite a lot from the Mackintosh pride in their early colonial connections. There's a picture of great-grandpa in the Mitchell Library. I'm supposed to resemble him even to the recurrence of this"—he pointed to a brownish mark, shaped like an arrow-head, which showed up clearly on his left temple. "It's supposed to occur in alternate generations, so I've evidently come by it illegally. Captain Royal Mackintosh was the pride of his regiment, and the terror of less gifted husbands—"

With a sudden sensation of nausea I realised why I always seemed to be glimpsing another face behind Roy's—a feeling as though an insecurely-tied mask had slipped and another face—a strange face—looked forth. I remembered the picture well, and the sensation its discovery, together with a bundle of valuable MS., had caused, though previously I had never connected it with Roy. But it was Roy Grey in another setting—the



"One night he broke guard, swam the river with leg-irons on—
Gad! he was a man—and met her."

same high-bridged nose and firmly-moulded mouth—handsome, full of character in the boy; predatory, arrogant in his namesake. He leaned forward, his face pillow'd on his arms; in the fire-light his hair looked redder than ever, and the sudden flash of white teeth in the strong face gave it a reckless, devil-may-care look. There were queer tales about him; tales of wild love-affairs and violent outbursts of rage; personally, I only knew him as a brilliant student and a good pal; he was Wal's friend rather than mine.

"They called him 'Cat-o'-nine-tails Mackintosh,' I believe. Never gave a man less than two hundred lashes; they used to beg to be hanged—no false sentiment about great-grandpa—"

Wally snorted suddenly, and a spasm of distaste passed over Bert's face. Roy went on:

"He was Magistrate of this district about 1834—relived old Solomon Wiseman for a few months. He quite enjoyed his little sojourn in the Bush, to judge from his Diary."

Whether it was some trick of the firelight it was hard to tell, but his mouth was mocking, arrogant. A vague feeling of repulsion stirred within me.

"Must have been a rotten hound," Wally murmured, and Roy laughed.

"Autres temps, autres mœurs," he quoted. "Great-grandpa was a great lad with the ladies, I assure you. A bundle of letters was found with the portrait that would ruin more reputations than a private detective. The family tried to suppress them as well as the Diary, but fortunately they have been presented to the Mitchell—with careful

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"As she passed the gangs one may guess that many appreciative eyes rested on her, and she was not long in returning the admiration."

censorship, of course. There's one tale in the Diary that is particularly appropriate to the time and the place. Happened while he was here. It's not a pretty tale, or one that points a moral, but it's good. Like to hear it?"

There was a general murmur of assent, and we rolled over and settled ourselves comfortably for the story.

"Captain Royal of the 59th was sent as Relieving Magistrate to the Ferry, and accepted the appointment mainly, as far as I can judge, to escape the unpleasant results of an indiscreet amour with the wife of an Important Personage in Sydney. There were a great number of men working on the chain-gangs at the time, hewing out the rock and building the retaining wall for the road. Theirs was no eight-hour day, and the state of the road to-day testifies to the solidarity of the work they put in. At night the convicts were chained together in the block-houses provided for them—you'll find the ruins of some of them on the other side of the river, up behind Judgment Rock."

"What's that?" asked Bert.

"Oh, that's where they used to execute the sentences imposed here. The marks of the chains are still visible on the rock. The good old days!"

"Poor cows," Wally murmured, and Roy lifted his eyebrows with a cynical little smile.

"There were a few farms in the Valley, mostly run by assigned labour. The largest of them was old Wiseman's—his old homestead is now the Hawkesbury Inn. On one of the farms was a girl working as general and seamstress. Her name was Ruth—the rest of it I don't know. Captain Royal, with gentle irony, always refers to her as 'Mistress Ruth.'"

There was a strange, horrible intensity about the man as he spoke; an unfamiliar tone in his voice which seemed to have grown suddenly thick and coarse.

"She seems to have been one of those unfortunates sent out for little or nothing. No matter, she was young and pretty, and great-grandpa was deucedly bored in his enforced seclusion. You can almost see the girl in his description of her—bit of a poet, the old boy. 'She is fair, with eyes like the brown of wood-pools—hair honey-gold and soft red lips.' He goes into more intimate details that leave us no doubt that Mistress Ruth's hidden charms were in keeping with her more obvious ones."

"Oh! get on with the story." Bert's voice was tense.

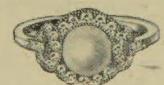
"H'm—it does rather make one's pulse—er—race, doesn't it?" The slow thick voice pounded on my nerves, and the laugh that followed it roused a sudden unreasoning desire to smash my fist in the smiling face. The mask had slipped!

"Well, the young lady seems to have had no great discernment. As she passed the gangs one may guess that many appreciative eyes rested on her, and she was not long in returning the admiration. A fellow working on one of the gangs—not even a soldier—won her favour. The Captain simply refers to him as 'A well set-up, sullen fellow, transported for conspiracy in a political rebellion.' At this stage of the romance, along comes G.-G.-P. In the ordinary course of events, the young couple would have probably served their term and settled down to humdrum

[Continued overleaf.]



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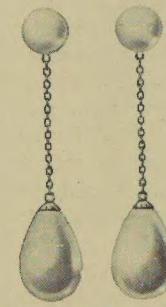
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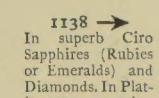
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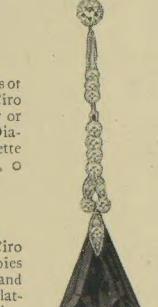
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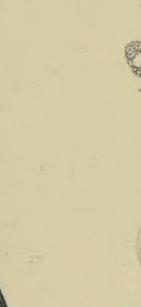
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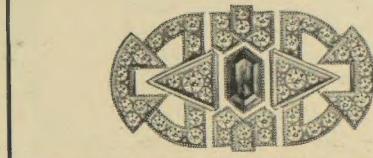
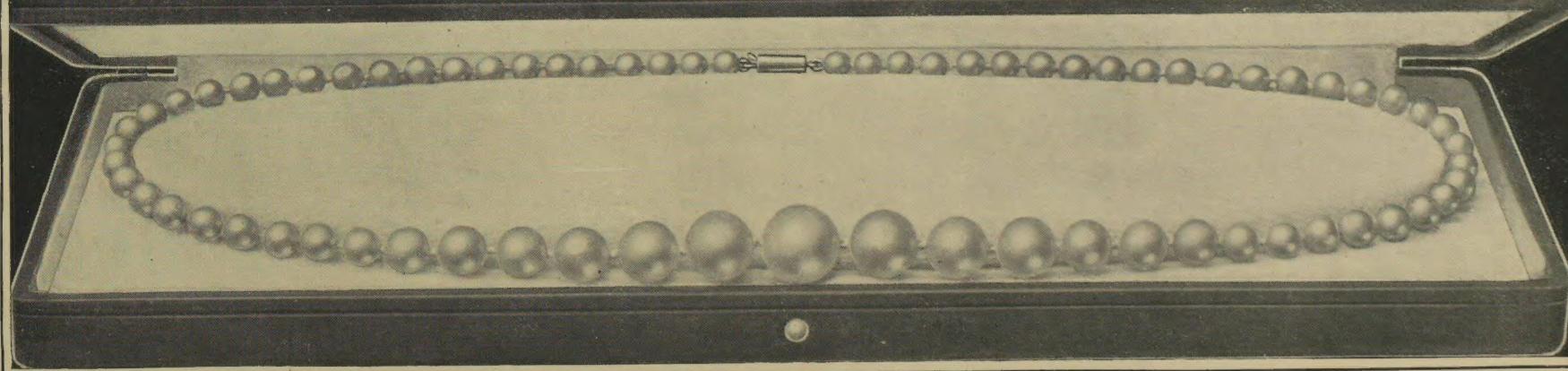
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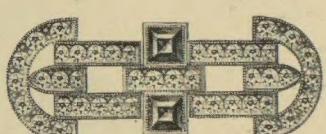
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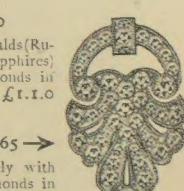
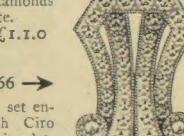
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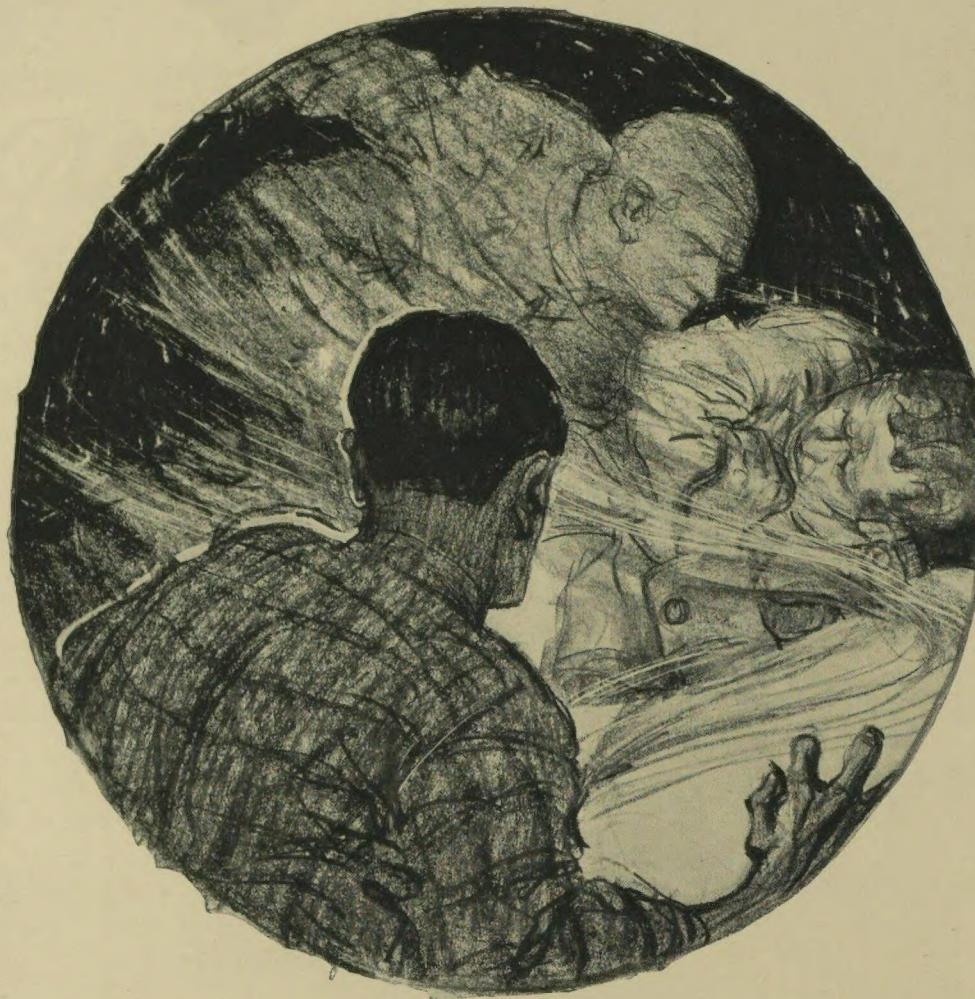
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connubial bliss. But the Captain's intervention raises the story to the heights of grand opera. Mistress Ruth lived on this side of the river, and he was not long in remarking her charms. He arranged with her employer—no doubt for a consideration—that she should be sent to wait at his table. But, as I remarked, Mistress Ruth had little discernment. She absolutely refused the good Captain's advances—ay, threatened to throw herself into the river if he persisted, and he had too keen a sense of feminine beauty to wish that to happen—before he was ready. Despite his pleas—and, give him his due, he didn't just take the girl—she was faithful to her convict-lover. Quite romantic, eh? Doubtless she told him harrowing stories of the assaults on her maiden virtue (a little touch like that adds pathos), with the result that one night he broke guard, swam the river with leg-irons on—Gad! he was a man—and met her. They had a boat ready—no one seemed to know where it had come from—and evidently intended to make a dash from the settlement. But the rapture of the first embrace was terminated by the arrival of great-grandpa and the guards. The hot-headed Leander was hauled back to camp, but not before he had laid a soldier out with an oar, and nearly ended the Captain's career as well—”

“Pity he didn't!” Wally's interruption was unheeded, and Roy went on.



Paralysed, hypnotised—what you will—I watched the Thing bend over the recumbent form.

the thud-thud of my heart; it was difficult to recognise Wal's voice.

“And—and the girl?”

[Continued overleaf.]

“But the old boy got in first, and cut his cheek open from temple to chin with a sword-thrust. He was sentenced next day in this very cave. In the generosity of his noble heart, the Captain sentenced him to two hundred lashes—and hanging, if he lasted long enough.”

There was a heavy, bemused look on the boy's face, like a man who is drugged and follows visions, strange and unreal. To my overwrought imagination, it seemed that the poisonous miasma of that old crime vitiated the air. Then the mocking voice continued: “Such was my worthy ancestor's subtlety, he saw a way to get what he wanted out of an unpleasant situation. Ruth pleaded for her lover, and he promised to free him—I'm afraid the story sounds rather melodramatic—but the Captain's magnanimity was tinctured with a good deal of worldly wisdom. The condemned man would be freed on one condition—the usual condition in such time-honoured circumstances. The Captain was hardly original, but he certainly had a *flair* for the dramatic. For on such a night as this Mistress Ruth fulfilled that condition—and at sunrise the morning after, what was left of her Leander was hanged on Judgment Rock.”

In the terrible pause that followed I could hear

what was left of her Leander was hanged on Judgment Rock.”

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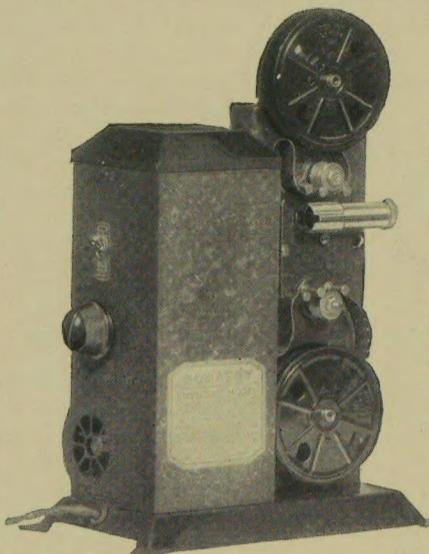


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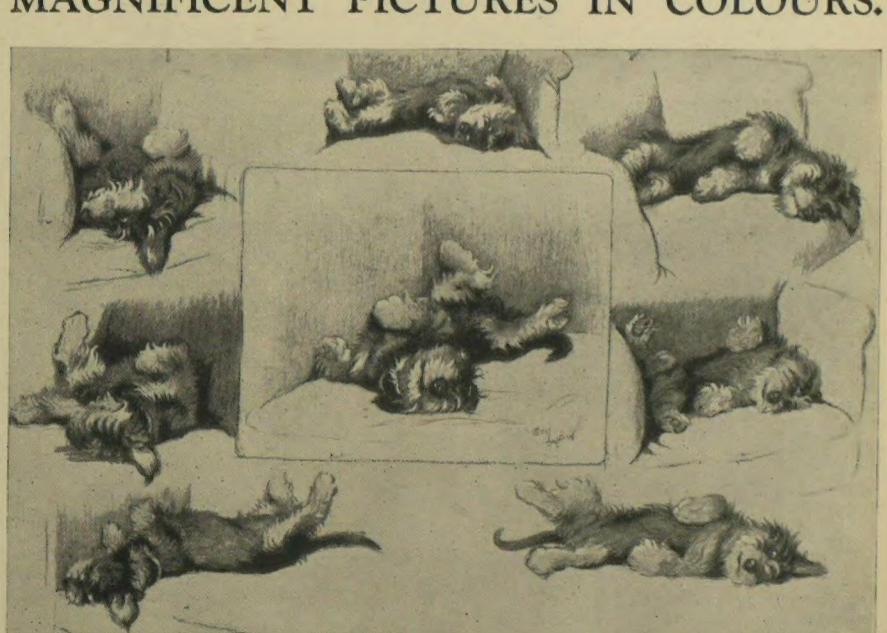
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Silence—that heavy silence, pregnant with meaning, vibrant with unuttered emotion; a silence filled with condemnation, strangely, in my mind, not only of the long-dead Royal Mackintosh, but of this new Roy Grey, with the heavy, sneering mouth. Suddenly he laughed, a low, subtly stirring laugh, wholly unlike his usual guffaw.

"Poor old great-grandpa doesn't seem to be very popular. Evidently meat too strong for delicate stomachs. Injured Galahads, eh?"

Wally stood up. "Oh, shut up!—I'm no saint, but—" The shrug was more eloquent than words. A little prickling sensation crept up my spine as the low, sneering laugh came again. Another face, another voice—in a moment, I felt that he would be metamorphosed entirely into the Captain, with his gay scarlet coat and gold epaulettes. The mask was off!

At Wally's gruff "I'm going to turn in," Bert and I followed his example. The "good-nights" were brief, almost terse. Only Roy was talkative.

"What? So early? Wouldn't like another tale? No? Ah, well, I'll solace the lonely hours with dreams of the lovely Ruth."

Again the prickling sensation of terror; there was a menace in the very air—a sense of threatening danger like the presage of an approaching thunder-storm. The night was suddenly fraught with hidden horror—the stars unutterably cold....

It seemed hours before I slept. The fire died down and I got up to put a log on. In the dim light I could see the others rolled in their blankets. While I watched them, I dozed....

Even in my sleep the sense of impending terror pursued me, and I woke again with the clutch of icy hands upon my heart—a feeling of dull, overpowering dread, intangible and yet intensely real. The air

was still in the impalpable hush of those deep hours that lie between midnight and dawning—when the very earth seems dead and the stars ineffably remote and passionless. The fire still glowed redly, and the occasional flicker of a flame sent the shadows dancing across the roof. A long-drawn breath, half-sigh, half-groan, seemed to crystallise my fears—reluctantly I raised myself on my elbow. The thought came to me that the last log must have been green, for the air was heavy with grey smoke; though, strangely enough, there was no acrid odour. Half-dreaming, I watched it gyrate above Roy's sleeping form, thinking that

there must be an air-eddy there; for several minutes it swirled, growing thicker.... Then, with the throb of my heart pounding in my ears, I realised that the smoke was slowly assuming a definite shape, and the shape was that of a tall, swarthy man clad in the shapeless grey of a convict! Paralysed, hypnotised—what you will—I watched the Thing bend over the recumbent form; on its thin, dark face—a keen face, with a livid scar across one cheek—was a look of hate—burning, blinding hate, such as I hope never to see again. For long minutes It gazed, the face contorted with unspeakable triumph. Slowly, as though forced by the unearthly power that radiated from this "Other," the red head stirred, and Roy raised himself on one arm. At first his face wore the look of a newly-awakened man—dull, uncomprehending; suddenly, understand-

ing leapt into the eyes, terror into the face. And, most terrible of all, the frozen horror of recognition. Roy Grey, did I say? No, before me was Captain Royal Mackintosh of the 59th; the arrogant, cruel face grew livid, the eyes black, distended with fear; the red, sensual mouth hung loose; and on the drawn, scarred face of that "Other" crept a slow smile as of a man who has settled a long and bitter score....

I must have shrieked aloud. In a flash the grey shape was gone; the century-old drama was ended. For Royal Mackintosh Grey lay dead, his face contorted like that of a man stricken down in fear.—[THE END.]



Around the fire, our blankets were spread . . . and we stretched lazily in the glow of the logs.

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The Illustrated London News Christmas Number, 1931.

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THE FIRST CHRISTMAS GIFTS. A Full-Page in Colours from the Picture by FÉLIX DE GRAY.

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THE DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS. A Full-Page in Colours. Reproduced from the Painting by MARK SYMONS; Exhibited at the Royal Academy, 1931.

To this family of little girls Christmas has brought, surely, as many toys as a child's heart could wish.

COUNT SASHA PAYS HIS RENT. A Short Story by ST. VINCENT TROUBRIDGE. With Illustrations by STEVEN SPURRIER.

A tale in which an Austrian count and a beautiful peasant girl meet again unexpectedly in the strange, topsy-turvy, post-war world.

A SALUTE TO THE VANQUISHED. A Full-Page in Colours after the Picture by A. D. McCORMICK.

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A PAINTER'S VISIONS OF FAMOUS POEMS. A Double-Page in Colours from the Paintings by GUSTAV ADOLF MOSSA.

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A modern painter's version of the ancient legend; with a green dragon that lurks underground.

THE UNDERSTUDY. A Short Story by D. L. MURRAY, Author of "The Bride Adorned" and "Stardust." Illustrated by W. R. S. STOTT.

The most unlikely of deliverers shows that she, too, can ride the white stallion, and saves Helga, the circus-rider, from the machinations of Hauptmann Ritter von Ehrenstein.

THE MIRACLE OF THE PEACH-TREE: AN OLD TIBETAN LEGEND. By BARBARA BINGLEY. Illustrated by LETTICE SANDFORD.

In the shadow of the great hills the Lama tells of how the peach-tree flowered in the season of dead leaves, and of the finding of the ninth Dalai Lama, in whose honour is danced the Dance of the Vanquished Ghous.

THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF THE LITTLE LIGHTS. A Page in Colours from the Candles modelled and coloured by MME DELARUE-MARDRUS.

The Little Lights are the candles of the Christmas tree, but never has a Christmas tree had candles such as these—exquisitely modelled into the likenesses of Sarah Bernhardt, William the Conqueror, and many others.

EVERYDAY TYPES OF A HUNDRED YEARS AGO. By DOROTHY MARGARET STUART. With Ten Reproductions in Colours.

A glimpse of the England of a century ago, when children ran to the raree-man's peep-show instead of to the cinema, and the lamp-lighter's-boy tended the oil-lamps where to-day the flood-lights glare.

"**A LITTLE CHILD WITH LAUGHING LOOK, A LOVELY WHITE, UNWRITTEN BOOK.**" A Full-Page in Colours from the Pastel by JOHN RUSSELL, R.A. (1745-1806).

A happy study of eighteenth-century childhood.

A ROD IN PICKLE FOR THE DUTCH: MR. PEPYS AT CHATHAM. A Double-Page in Colours after the Academy Picture by A. D. McCORMICK.

The famous Samuel earned renown not only as a diarist; for "to Your Praises, Sir, the whole Ocean bears witness."

THE MILLER'S TALE. A Full-Page in Colours from the Academy Picture by MEREDITH W. HAWES, A.R.C.A.

An illustration to Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales."

THE ETIQUETTE OF A CUP OF TEA. By YASUNOSUKE FUKUKITA. With Four Illustrations in Colour from Pictures by SAITEN TAMURA.

Within strictly formal rules, the Tea Ceremony of Japan gives opportunity for the appreciation of art and nature, and encourages individuality of character and opinion among the participants.

THE SORCERER. A Full-Page in Colours from the Painting by A. FORESTIER.

With the aid of his sinister tomes, the mediæval wizard weaves his magic spells.

FLOATING ISLAND. A Page in Colours from the Drawing by S. H. SIME.

A dark fantasy, with its pine-clad isle borne through the storm on the crest of angry waves.

THE PIED PONY. A Story from the Old French, by H. F. M. PRESCOTT, Author of "The Unhurrying Chase," "The Lost Flight," etc.; with Illustrations by EDWARD OSMOND.

Youth is served, age discomfited, in this charming story of mediæval Lorraine; but the real hero is the pied pony.

FOUR-LEAFED CLOVER. A Short Story by CARLOS DE BATLLE. With Seven Illustrations in Colours by C. S. DE TEJADA.

For each leaf of the clover a wish is granted in this tale, which captures the very atmosphere of old Spain.

THE CAPTAIN'S COLD. A Short Story by AGNES MURE MACKENZIE, Author of "Cypress in Moonlight," "Keith of Kinnellan," etc. Illustrated by GORDON NICOLL.

In the grim guerrilla fighting of Napoleon's Spanish campaign a French captain billets his men in an old dilapidated farm-house, and there would assuredly have lost his life but for—a cold in the head.

NOTE.—All the characters in the stories in this number are imaginary.

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A FIGURE OF FUN.

FROM THE PICTURE BY CECIL ALDIN.

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

CHRISTMAS NUMBER 1931



FELIX
DE
GRAY



THE FIRST CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

Eastern sages, faring far,
Melchior, Gaspar, Balthazar,
Saw on high the Mystic Star.

Rare the gifts they brought to Her—
(So the Holy Books aver):
Gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.



"THE DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS."

FROM THE PAINTING BY MARK L. SYMONS, EXHIBITED IN THE ROYAL ACADEMY, 1931. REPRODUCED BY COURTESY OF THE OWNERS,
THE CORPORATION ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM, BURY.



"How much longer, Albert Tomkins, are you going to stand there and see me working my fingers to the bone?"

COUNT SASHA PAYS HIS RENT.

By ST. VINCENT TROUBRIDGE. 

Illustrated by STEVEN SPURRIER, R.O.I.



R. TOMKINS had been a butler in some very good families. Profiting, as he thought, by their example, he had married an actress. But when the day for retirement came, he found that he lacked in his helpmate the capable housekeeper and cook who would have assisted him to the dignity of "Furnished Gentlemen's Chambers" off St. James's Street. Handicapped by a large, blowsy companion with an instinct to send out for already-cooked meats, Mr. Tomkins could not aspire above the Kennington Road, though he was able to supplement his income by occasional appearances in his old rôle when the Belgravia Catering Company

was in need of outside help. At present Mr. Tomkins was worried about his second-floor back. He did not greatly concern himself with the private affairs of his lodgers, beyond the occasional intervention called for "to keep the place respectable," but his experienced eye had already told him that the second-floor back was a "real gentleman." His wife had also told him—several times, in fact—that the second-floor back was a week behind with his rent.

"How much longer, Albert Tomkins," she returned to the charge, drawing a soiled wrapper round her ample form, "are you going to stand there and see me working my fingers to the bone for you while that young feller sits upstairs in luxury and idleness? You must go up and see him this very minute."

Mr. Tomkins forced back as disloyal the idea that if the tall, distinguished-looking foreigner with the slightly greying hair and the scar on his temple had extended something more than distant courtesy to the former principal boy, her vehemence would have been lessened. "Very well, my dear," he answered with resignation, and folded up the midday sporting edition carefully for future reference.

When Mr. Tomkins's heavy knock fell upon the door, Count Sasha Greifstein had just finished restraining his dilapidated valise. From it he had extracted a small silver-plated revolver, engraved on the butt with that fabulous griffin that was the crest of his house, and a packet containing a few letters, a photograph or two, and some faded press cuttings—the flotsam and jetsam of a life he had decided to end.

Mr. Tomkins knocked again. "Come in," called Sasha.

"It's about the rent—" began Mr. Tomkins, and instinctively he added "Sir." Sasha's brows knitted. The cursed rent; he had forgotten that! How ironical it all was! When his decision had brought his disordered affairs at last into a sort of fearful symmetry, this demon of poverty had leapt out and tripped him up once again. He, a Greifstein,

could not go out in debt to these worthy people. . . . One could not even die like a gentleman nowadays.

"You shall have it, Mr. Tomkins," said Sasha. "Of that I give you my word of honour." He smiled disarmingly, and added: "At the moment I don't know how, I admit; but by this evening I shall have thought of something."

Almost to Sasha's surprise, Mr. Tomkins accepted this somewhat airy assurance. "Very good, Sir," he said respectfully, and prepared to withdraw; but at the door he turned and spoke again in mysterious, though not unkindly tones. "Per'aps I may 'ave a suggestion to put forward this evening meself."

With a sigh Sasha Greifstein returned to his task; but the visit of his landlord had disturbed him, and he was restless and uneasy. When his eyes, wandering over the papers, chanced upon a photograph of three young men in tight-fitting foreign cavalry uniforms, a look of pain crossed the lined but handsome face, and, snatching his hat, he strode downstairs and out into the open air. Instinctively his feet led him towards Kennington Park, where he would find some degree of quiet; but his mind was exactly a thousand miles away from the drab prospect of South London.

How well he remembered the taking of that photograph! It had been upon the day that he and his two friends, Count Adelbert Duchinsky and Max von Klausenburg, had all joined the Guard Dragoons together, and the old photographer in Vienna had been so flattering and so obviously delighted with his noble clients. Once launched on the sea of the past, his memories carried him still farther back—to the ancient castle of Greifstein that was his home, jutting out boldly over the valley of the Greif, and commanding as far as the eye could see the fair Alpine lands, rolling fir woods and rich pastures of which the Counts of Greifstein had been the lords and owners for close upon six hundred years.

Then the two strands of memory met and mingled. Clear before him rose the pictures of the visit of his friends to his home. They came with him from Vienna to shoot the chamois, as he himself had done since he was as tall as his rifle. His father, old Count Ulrich Greifstein, had met them in the great lofty hall of the Schloss, hung with antlers and lined by the suits of armour of each successive lord of Greifstein. He had put the young men at their ease in a moment with his grave courtesy and kindly smile, and for dinner the grey-haired major-domo had brought up the priceless Tokay from the rambling cellars to do honour to the untutored palates of youth. But they had dispersed laughing to bed at an early hour, since they were to start before dawn and the Schornstein beat was one of the most famous for chamois in the whole country, second only to the preserves of the Emperor himself.

The clang of the trams in the Kennington Road jerked Sasha's mind from the vaulted hall of Schloss Greifstein to Mr. Tomkins's far from vaulted second-floor back. How sordid and meaningless life had become—just a breathless scramble from one insufficient meal to another! A



... the heart of a child at play had been given to the young Count who strode whistling up through his own fir woods one June morning with never a glance to right or left.

wave of weakness swept over him, but when it had passed his lips drooped in a bitter smile. He realised suddenly, and the consciousness of it was somehow pleasing, that, although he had fallen far down from his god-like estate, he must still be of the gods—for he had overcome that fear of death which is a mortal's heritage so completely that it no longer existed for him. Then the few dusty plane trees of the park began to change again magically to firs, and the mingled odours of South London were swept away before a keen upland wind.

Far up above the restless, chattering world, upon an outflung spur of the mighty Schornstein *massif* itself, the home of the cowherd Haupt seemed to cling precariously to the slope of a clearing in the woods. Built of wood, with a projecting balcony gaily painted and deep overhanging eaves for protection against the heavy snows of winter, it wore a friendly air.

Haupt was a dull, heavy man, his wife a faded drudge; but when Trudi their daughter was born, a star must have danced. Very slight, with a gay defiance in her tip-tilted nose, and laughing mouth oddly at variance with the steady lights in her large hazel eyes, she was an elfin figure as she danced her way across the clean, sweet-scented upland meadows with her chestnut hair streaming behind her in the wind. Trudi was born to dance. She danced through life, and at the midsummer festivals of remote Alpine villages all the dancing prizes fell into her lap. Although she had only left her sixteenth birthday a few weeks behind her, she was already a woman, and even Mother Haupt did not know that it was two years since the heart of a child at play had been given upon the instant to the young Count who strode whistling up through his own fir woods one June morning with never a glance to right or left. Nor was she aware that her daughter's most cherished possession was a stained photograph cut from a badly printed local newspaper showing a young man with curly hair wearing the becoming uniform of the Imperial and Royal Guard Dragoons.

October is the month of the chamois-hunter, for the herds come down from the almost inaccessible places above the snowline, where they find their summer feed, to the shelter of the woods. It is also the month of rutting, and the old bucks, bearing the finest heads of the prized curved-back horns, leave their solitudes to seek out does from the herd. As

October is the month, so is dawn the hour, for it is then that the sentinels may relax their vigilance as the restless, suspicious herd wanders feeding across the forest glades.

So, before the October morning dawned bright, cold and clear, the party from Schloss Greifstein was already toiling in single file up the narrow mountain-path. When the upper forest levels had been reached, they dispersed silently, each with his accompanying green-clad *jäger*. At noon panting footmen from the Schloss arrived at the clearing, and, since the day was fine, set up their rough trestle-table at the corner of Haupt's house beside his row of miniature haycocks. By the time the sportsmen, tired and hungry, had dropped one by one out of the woods above, cold meats in every appetising form and choice Rhine wines in tall purplish-brown bottles had loaded it down.

Sport had been good: Max von Klausenburg had secured a good beast; Sasha had shot two; while Adelbert had a missed chance to curse good-humouredly, so it was a merry party that sat down to lunch. When the meal was over, and pipes lit, Sasha called out gaily: "Come, Daddy Haupt. Bring out your fiddle and give us a tune."

The old peasant shuffled obediently forward with a little bow, but when he had tucked his battered instrument under his chin and launched into one of the quick jiggling measures of the mountains, the laughing young men soon realised that they had a considerable if rough-hewn artist before them. But there was a greater surprise to come, for with the first high notes of the old folk-melody a tiny

timorous figure crept out from behind a haycock; a barefooted figure with a tight green bodice laced over a white linen shirt, and a cherry-coloured apron above the short green skirt. Doubtfully the girl moved forward at first into the half-circle that had formed round the fiddler, and even when the white twinkling feet broke instinctively into the rhythm of the tune, the big hazel eyes looked appealingly round. Sasha, guessing that the child was Haupt's daughter, threw her a smile and an encouraging wave of the hand.

A match thrown into gunpowder could not have had more effect. Suddenly, for an instant, the supple young body seemed to stiffen, then swung again into the dance with a stamp and a go, a dashing, challenging, madcap zest that set the pampered darlings of the Viennese salons stamping and clapping in time like a pack of schoolboys.

"Shame to waste such beauty on a few *jäger*!" whispered Max to Adelbert.

The fair young man shook his head. "It'll not be wasted," he whispered back. "Just look at Sasha!"

And, indeed, the young Count of Greifstein was not as his companions had known him. A dead cigarette hanging from his fingers, he stood bent slightly forward staring at the girl who now clung breathless to her father's arm. In his mind was confusion, almost unreality. He felt like a man who has stumbled unaware upon the fairies dancing in their ring under the moon. The girl's wild, innocent beauty seemed to sweep him back to the clean eager pleasures of boyhood; the swirling eddies of the Greif, where the big trout lurked, and the thrill of his first chamois. He shivered for a moment as he thought of the painted lips that had pressed against his, since the day he set off proudly for Vienna in his bright new uniform.

Like a man emerging from a trance, he came slowly back to the forest clearing. "Come here, little one," he said, and beckoned.

Trudi crossed and curtsied before him, but she did not simper as the peasant girls do and her head was held high.

"And what is your name?"

"I am Trudi, *Herr Graf*," she said, and bobbed again.

"Do you always dance like this?"

"Oh, yes, *Herr Graf*, I love it so. It is all my life." The keen grey eyes looked for a moment deep into the hazel ones.

"Then you shall go to Vienna and be trained. You will go far." There was a finality in the young man's tone, and he was turning to

reach for his rifle when he saw the peasant's hand raised in protest. To Haupt, Vienna was a distant city and an evil one, and, inarticulate though he was, he could not let his darling go like this. But the young Count knew his people and forestalled him quickly.

"No harm shall come to her, Daddy. My word of honour. It is best so." The old man subsided, muttering, and before Trudi the heavens reopened.

As the party started to file downwards into the quick-falling Alpine twilight, that still left the jagged peaks aglow, the girl slipped from her father's side, ran to Sasha and, lifting his hand, covered it with kisses.

Two shrilly-screaming children, locked in battle, cannoned against Sasha's knees. What was the good of thinking of days that were dead and gone? he asked himself savagely. Would the revenues of Greifstein pay his rent now, or its memories feed him? Tomkins and the rent settled on his mind as a heavy cloud. It was clear to him that there was a duty here. That rent must be paid even if it meant dragging on for a few weeks more of misery. But where was the money to come from? With a sigh, Sasha sank back upon his seat and tried to banish Kennington from his thoughts again.

To him it was not in the least strange that that particular picture should have sprung out across the gulf of years with its colours as bright and fresh as the day they had been painted on his mind. For, though he had not seen her since, the vision of that gay, happy nymph, who had danced for him alone, was one that had remained with him. It had come to hold for him an inner meaning as a symbol of all the bright and lovely things that seemed to have gone from life itself. He knew dimly that a casual word had been spoken in the right quarter; a few thousand crowns disbursed after enquiry by the steward of the Greifstein estate; and that she had been admitted as a pupil of the school attached to the Imperial Ballet in Vienna.

But that June, while the lime trees were still blooming in the Prater and the white-topped tables crowded in the Ringstrasse cafés, the crack of a pistol in distant Serajevo echoed round the world. Before even the harvest was gathered into the barns, the pleasant, easy, ordered pageant of life had changed its pace to a savage, hectic whirlwind that was to blow the Empire of the Hapsburgs into the limbo of forgotten things. Sasha shivered a little, despite the warm sunshine, as if some breath of that chill wind blew upon him yet. With unseeing eyes he strode forward, while upon the screen of his memory flashed one vivid picture after another from that dead past, which somehow seemed so much more real than the sordid present or the dark future that the silver-plated revolver held for him.

How wild with delight the young officers of the Guard Dragoons had been! Active service at last . . . a quick and glorious campaign to teach the insolent Serbians a much-needed lesson . . . then the triumphant return, when all Vienna would turn out to do honour to its heroes. Max and Adelbert had been betting, he remembered, as to the number of weeks the war would last. But Max had fallen in the wild fighting round Lemberg, where the flower of the Austro-Hungarian cavalry was dashed to pieces, whilst it was in the dreary marshes of the Pripet that Adelbert's men dug his shallow grave.

For three years Sasha had borne a charmed life. From frozen Masurian Lakes to the Adriatic the fortune of war had tossed him to and fro, scoring innumerable hard little lines round eyes and mouth, and flecking the curly hair with grey. But in 1917, in one of the desperate battles upon the Isonzo, a splinter of an Italian shell had caught him full upon the forehead, and granted him some months of merciful oblivion.

When Sasha came out of hospital, the outward semblance of peace had descended again upon the world, but he soon found himself penniless. Schloss Greifstein, right in the path of the demoralised army pouring home in retreat, had been sacked, and his valley lands lay desolate. Then, at the bidding of the obscure and uneasy gods of international finance, the Austrian currency started on its downward plunge. Inflation . . . arbitrage . . . strange jargon filled men's mouths, but still, with every day, the tiny capital he had saved had melted like snow before the summer's sun.

Since then, Sasha had tried them all—all the devious ways in which decayed aristocracy, knowing no trade, can struggle on a little further; all the petty shifts and expedients of poverty and pride. He had raged often in his heart at the inefficiency and corruption he saw in the post-war world that would have none of him, for he knew himself in every

way a better man than the majority of those who now jostled him into the gutter. But that fight was already lost. . . . What was the use of going on? Wearily he turned his steps back towards the poky little bed-sitting room that for the last few weeks had borne ironically the name of home.

When evening brought Mr. Tomkins to his door again, Sasha's confidence of the morning had turned to dull despair, but it was from this unexpected quarter that assistance came. Mr. Tomkins coughed apologetically and asked: "Have you got a dress suit?"

The irrelevance of the question made Sasha stare; even surprised him into a nod. Mr. Tomkins had been thinking, too, during the day, for he liked this quiet-mannered gentleman now in such obvious distress. Falteringly he pursued his train of thought.

"It's like this. I often works at nights for the Belgravia Catering people—balls, receptions, and such-like. They've got a big 'do' on to-night—theatrical jollification of some sort, and, knowing they'd be short-handed, I thought you might come along with me—that is, if you'd care to." Mr. Tomkins ended almost in a tone of deference, for his lodger had not moved.

A waiter! For an instant fierce resentment caught Sasha by the throat; then he fought it down and smiled. What did it matter now? Indeed, it was providential, since it would enable him to square his earthly accounts.

"Thank you, Tomkins. You are a good fellow."

"Then I'll call for you in about 'arf an hour." And as the door closed behind the ex-butler, the thirty-fourth Count of Greifstein started tugging again at the straps of his valise.

The private rooms of the De Luxe Hotel had witnessed many famous parties, but Lord Ravenspur's party in honour of Trudi, the dancer, who was London's latest idol, looked like eclipsing them all. The five-hundredth performance of "Kiss and Tell," which was to be celebrated, found her triumph as fresh as ever, and disorganised for an hour the traffic outside the theatre where her name blazed in great letters of light.

Though it was common talk that Lord Ravenspur and half-a-dozen others were mad about her, malice itself could not find a word against



Suddenly, for an instant, the supple young body seemed to stiffen, then swung again into the dance with a stamp and a go, a dashing, challenging, madcap zest.

her reputation, and the only photograph to be seen on her dressing-table was a very dirty old thing of a man in some sort of foreign uniform. The public loved her. They loved her in the infinitely tender grace of her ballet-dancing, in the comic spirit of her old-fashioned mazurka; above all, they loved her when she danced with her incomparable madcap zest to the quick jigging measures of the mountains.

All London would be there, and several Ambassadors were coming on after the Foreign Office reception. By eleven o'clock the party had fairly started, and behind the long white buffet at the end of the room, where a dozen waiters were ranged, Sasha, by the side of Tomkins, strove in a sort of dream to make his natural deftness pass for experience.

Half an hour later Tomkins thrust a tray of filled champagne glasses into Sasha's hand and said: "'Ere. 'And these round—and for Gawd's sake and mine don't drop 'em."

Upon the early stages of his perilous journey Sasha was too occupied with the balance of his unaccustomed load to notice his surroundings. People loomed into his consciousness at the range of about a foot, took

Then her eyes rested upon the tray he carried and filled with tears. "There must be some mistake," she almost whispered.

"There is no mistake, I assure you, *Fräulein*," Sasha answered gravely. "These years since the war, that have brought you fame, have crushed me utterly. I am here as a waiter."

Trudi looked distressed. "Can't I do anything to help?" she stammered. "I will arrange. . . . You must let me. . . ."

He raised his hand. "No, *Fräulein Trudi*," he said. "Your heart does you honour, but *that* cannot be."

A note of pity which stung him like a whip-lash crept into her voice. "But, at least, *Herr Graf*, there are the hundreds you advanced for me. That is a debt which I can repay. . . ."

Sasha looked steadily at the exquisite oval of her face. "That transaction belongs to the old days," he answered. "We were accustomed then to give without thought of repayment or calculation of interest."

"Oh, don't you understand?—I—I—"

He saw the tears welling up in her eyes again, and his proud soul was seared with agony. "You *pity* me," he said gently. "I know.



In her eyes there was a look of dawning recognition and delight. "*Herr Graf?*" she said almost doubtfully. "*Herr Graf.*"

or deposited a glass, frequently jogged his arm, then faded away again. That was all.

"Please, a moment, Lord Ravenspur. I should like to have a drink!"

Something musically familiar, some faint slurring of the vowels that spoke to him of his country, made Sasha look up as he automatically thrust forward his tray. He saw before him, where a trellised pillar made a little backwater in the crowd, a woman of rare beauty, with glistening chestnut hair drawn back from a delicate laughing face that seemed the reflection of some inner radiance. Her black velvet dress clung to her attractive figure, and upon her arm a dozen diamond bracelets flashed and jangled together as she slipped her sable coat from her shoulders and dismissed her escort with it.

Then she turned to Sasha. In her eyes there was a look of dawning recognition and delight. "*Herr Graf?*" she said almost doubtfully. "*Herr Graf.*" Her voice gathered conviction now, and she took a step towards him. "I see you don't remember me, *Herr Graf* . . . Trudi Haupt."

"At your service, *Fräulein*," he replied with non-committal politeness, and sent his mind plunging back into the past. In a flash memory had reproduced before him the scene in the clear mountain light—Max, Adelbert—the old fiddler and the barefooted peasant girl who had danced to them like some dryad of the woods. So she had grown into this woman of vivacious loveliness. . . .

You are kind, *Fräulein*, and I wish you every happiness in life, but this thing is too big for you. Good-bye."

Mr. Tomkins, hurrying forward to deal with the surprising and unseemly situation of a waiter engaging a guest in earnest conversation, arrived just in time to see his lodger bring two rigid heels together with a click and bow low across a tray to a beautiful lady who turned away weeping openly.

"'Ere! 'Ere!" he began. "You can't carry on like that."

To be pitied! He, Alexander Greifstein, to be pitied by the daughter of one of his father's cowherds, were she a million times a star! Fire raced through his veins, and he trembled violently. If she had struck him or thrown his menial position in his face, that would not have mattered; it would have been in keeping with this mad, modern world—but to pity him!

Tomkins took the tray out of Sasha's hands and looked at him kindly. "You'd best go 'ome," he said. "You looks a bit queer. I'll make it right for you 'ere and bring your money along."

But when Mr. Tomkins did reach Kennington Road with the dawn, he received another surprise. For the second-floor back lay sprawling across the bed with quite a small hole drilled through his temple and his right hand clenched on a silver-plated revolver. Mr. Tomkins noticed, as he loosened the grip, that the weapon had engraved upon its butt some funny kind of animal, half a bird and half a dragon.

THE END.



A SALUTE TO THE VANQUISHED.

A COURTESY OF WAR IN THE BRAVE DAYS OF BLAKE.

In the year 1652, Admiral Robert Blake, holding the chief command of the fleet against the Dutch, defeated Van Tromp in the Downs and De Witt and De Ruyter off the mouth of the Thames; but he was beaten by Van Tromp off Dungeness. In '53, meeting Van Tromp again—this time off Portsmouth, and with Monck, Deane, and Penn—he

fought an indecisive action. This was followed by a battle off the Dutch coast, when the enemy were routed and Van Tromp was killed. During that period of less than two years, Blake and his officers captured or destroyed seventeen hundred Dutch ships. Here we see a prize crew about to board a defeated Dutchman, the officer saluting the vanquished captain.

AFTER THE PICTURE BY A. D. McCORMICK.

A Painter's Visions of Famous Poems : Mossa Illustrates Moore and Goethe.

PAINTINGS BY GUSTAV ADOLF MOSSA, INSPIRED BY SCHUMANN'S SETTINGS TO POEMS BY THOMAS MOORE AND GOETHE.



AN EPISODE FROM MOORE'S "LALLA ROOKH": THE PERI AND THE SLAIN HERO.

A Peri, cast out of Paradise, sought to return by bringing the gift most acceptable to the Almighty. First she brought a drop of a young patriot's blood shed for his country, but the gates of Heaven would not open for such an offering. How

she at last succeeded is told in "Paradise and the Peri," the second tale in Moore's poem "Lalla Rookh," and the subject of a cantata by Robert Schumann. The episode of the patriot's death, here pictured, is called "The King of Gazna."



AN EPISODE FROM GOETHE'S POEM "THE WALKING BELL": THE LITTLE SCHOOL-GIRL TRUANT.

Once there was a little girl who used to play truant from school, instead of sitting obediently in class and attending to her lessons. Her mother said to her: "Do you not hear the bell that calls you? It will chase you and catch you, naughty

child!" And, sure enough, one day the bell did pursue her, and so she returned to the right path. The artist's picture was suggested by Schumann's setting of Goethe's poem "The Walking Bell."

A Painter's Vision of a Famous Poem: Mossa Illustrates Heine.

PAINTING BY GUSTAV ADOLF MOSSA, INSPIRED BY SCHUMANN'S SETTING TO A POEM BY HEINRICH HEINE.



A SCENE FROM HEINE'S POEM "THE FOEMEN BROTHERS": FRATRICIDAL COMBAT TO THE DEATH FOR A LADY'S LOVE.

Two brothers once fell in love with the same lady, the Countess Laura, and fought to the death for her sake beneath her castle window. Her eyes were aflame as, leaning from the casement, she watched this fratricidal combat. But to which of the two did her heart incline? Nothing could reveal her choice.

Let the sword decide! Therefore they fell upon each other, and both of them were slain. So fierce was their hatred, folk declare, that their ghosts still come by night to do battle beneath the fair one's window. Such is the story related in Heine's poem "The Foemen Brothers," set to music by Schumann.



"ST. GEORGE HE WAS FOR ENGLAND."

THE LEGEND OF ST. GEORGE.

St. George as the patron saint of England has become the embodiment of valour and chivalry. Who he was in actual fact is not definitely known. Gibbon identified him with George of Laodicea, Archbishop of Alexandria from 356 to 361, but this theory has been discarded. According to the tradition now held most probable, St. George was a Christian of noble parentage born about 285 A.D. in Cappadocia (eastern Anatolia). He won renown as a soldier and was chosen by the Roman Emperor Diocletian for his personal retinue. When Diocletian resolved to persecute the Christians, however, George protested and resigned his post. Torture failed to shake his faith, and he was beheaded, it is said, on 23rd April, 303. The supposed place of his martyrdom was at Lydda, in Palestine, where a sepulchre believed to be his was found in 1868. Legends gathered about his name, and especially the famous story of St. George and the Dragon. It is an interesting fact that Lydda is not very far from Joppa and Arsuf, both claimed to be the scene of the ancient Greek legend of Perseus, who rescued the virgin Andromeda from

a sea-monster. The Greek hero's feat was the origin of kindred adventures in many Christian fables of knights and dragons. Tales of St. George's encounter with a dragon have been traced back to the sixth century. The first version to reach western Europe was that in the thirteenth-century Latin of "The Golden Legend." The scene of the fight was laid near Silene, in Libya, but in mediæval days English folk believed that it happened at Coventry, for St. George's fame reached our land very early. Even in Saxon times he is said to have been regarded as England's patron saint, but it was after the Third Crusade, during which he was said to have appeared to Richard Cœur de Lion at the siege of Acre, that he was accorded national honours. In 1222 the feast day of St. George (April 23) was instituted by the Council of Oxford, and in 1330 he became patron saint of the Order of the Garter, then just founded by Edward III. The Royal Chapel at Windsor was dedicated to St. George in 1348. In the words of an old poem preserved in Bishop Percy's "Reliques"—"St. George he was for England."



"She was as pretty a spectacle as you could see, sweeping round the ring . . . with one of the long old-fashioned skirts she always wore, floating behind, and a tiny black lace veil from her silk hat to the tip of her nose."

THE UNDERSTUDY.

A CIRCUS STORY.

By D. L. MURRAY.

Author of "The Bride Adorned" and "Stardust."



Illustrated by W. R. S. STOTT.

AMATEURS?" said the old clown, looking over the top of the steel spectacles that gave him such a severe look when in plain clothes. "No; you won't run across many amateurs in our business. You see"—he shook out the shimmering silk folds of a pair of vermillion pantaloons on to which he was sewing gold and silver stars—"ours is a job for what you might call specialists. Even to make a clown's dress like this, so as to hit the people slap in the eye, needs experience. And you may take it from me, you can't become a rider—what we reckon a rider—nor yet an acrobat, nor yet go on the wire nor the trapeze, without you've studied from the first days you could stand. That's why many circus people will tell you all this fancy education to-day is ruining the business: takes the kids away just when they most need to learn something useful. I'm speaking of what I know."

He paused in his sewing to gaze for a moment at the yellow flame of the Beatrice stove on which his tea-kettle was beginning to murmur. "Of course," he went on, "there are just one or two lines you can take up later in life with a fair chance of doing well. There's the *haute école*, for instance. I've known handsome girls who had the luck to find a good teacher and could afford to buy horses ready-made for 'em, leave the stage for the ring to show their looks off in a long habit and a tall hat. I'm speaking of years ago, but I dessay it's done still. In Paris they was all the rage at one time; you'd find young women of good family that had been used to horses from childhood posing as *haute école* stars, and collecting the rich young fellers round them like flies over the treacle-pot. In my eyes, of course, they couldn't compare with the girls that had belonged all their lives to the circus. I used to think it was their horses really earned the flowers and the *bombons*, while they just sat still in their saddles ogling the front rows; and I couldn't see they did any good to the business, teaching the public to swallow fourth-rate work like that." He let his sewing billow over his knees and ruminated. "No," he declared, "I never knew but one amateur do us a good turn—and that was a very queer case indeed."

I looked inquisitive, but the old man shook his head. "You won't want to waste all your afternoon listening to my yarning," he grumbled.

I brought out my cigar-case coaxingly. "I'd like your opinion of one of these weeds," I told him.

He stretched out his veined and wrinkled hand with alacrity. "You know my weak spot," he chuckled. He bit the end off and spat it out; a minute's enraptured silence followed. Then: "You've found something good this time, hain't you?" he enquired. "This reminds me of the brands those Austrian officers used to smoke."

"You worked in Austria, then?"

"Quite a time—long before the big war, you know. That was where this queer thing happened. I was with Rudolf Linden's show—Rudi Linden, we called him. It wasn't a big affair; he never reached a dozen waggons, I don't think. He was too soft-hearted a chap to get on; if ever he had a good week, some sucker would pitch him a sad tale and get away with most of it. He was one of these huge, yellow-bearded South Germans, looking like a holy man in a church window. I was his ring-clown; he had a Pole with four brown bears, two sailor-chaps that did perch-balancing and the slack-wire; he himself had one act with dogs (he never used to beat 'em), and another with singing canaries, and the horses he left to his wife—who, I may say, not wishing to hurt my own feelings, was the show."

"A real circus-woman, I suppose?"

"Born in it. She did what he called his 'liberty' horses. There were three of them, and I used to annoy old Rudi by clinking a milk-can behind the third. When he heard that he would stalk on a few paces very stately—till he judged he'd come to the next house on the round. But Helga, that was Mrs. Linden's name, did a better act on her own. She had a great fierce stallion—Marshal Radetzky some wag had christened him—that would let no one else mount him—which, I suppose, was how she was able to afford to buy him from the military, who had got sick of him—and she had trained this brute to *haute école*: Spanish walk, waltzes, all the bag of tricks. I don't want to see a better performer."

"A pretty powerful woman, I suppose."

"You wouldn't have said it to look at her. Tall, yes; but slim as a branch of blossom. Pale, laughing face, with a large mouth, like a school-girl's, flaxen hair, almost white, and the daintiest hands you ever saw. . . . No, I don't know how she held the Marshal with those little fists; p'raps it was just because she didn't tug at him and wasn't a weight on his back that he was kind to her. Anyway, they made a match of it; and she was as pretty a spectacle as you could see, sweeping round the ring on him with one of the long old-fashioned skirts she always



"The Marshal reared up, playful-like, coming into the ring; his hind-legs slip under him and he comes down on poor Helga."

wore, floating behind, and a tiny black lace veil from her silk hat to the tip of her nose."

"And did the flies buzz round the treacle?" I hazarded.

"Oh no! no!" said the old clown gravely. "She wasn't that sort at all. She was wrapped up in Rudi and he was wrapped up in her—there wasn't a loose end hanging over on either side. She used to send the flowers to the nearest children's hospital, and the brooches back by registered post. They were a pair of babes, she and her husband, and that made my gentleman's action all the more rotten."

"Your gentleman?"

"Hauptmann, that means Captain, Sieghold Ritter von Ehrenstein, and you'd think with a name like that an officer would take pains to be a gentleman, wouldn't you? But it is, or it used to be, different with these Continental army men. Splendid to look at; you should have seen the Hauptmann in his white tunic and sky-blue pants, sabre trailing, pince-nez on his long thin nose—that's comic to our ideas, I know—but a *man* all the time. First-class horseman at all the big jumping shows; killed three chaps in duels, and later, in the war, I heard, one of the finest officers they had, and most loved by his men. But when it came to women—women, that is, whom he took to be of a certain kind—just a wild beast. He started in after poor little Helga at Innsbruck where we showed for a day or two. She turned him down *pronto*, and thought she was rid of him. But no; next pitch we stopped at, the Hauptmann was there again—seemed his military duties were pretty slack—and when he has to wipe off another refusal he begins to turn nasty."

"But she had her husband to protect her?"

"She never told Rudi these bothers when they happened. He'd have gone first melancholy, then mad; and it didn't do, not in those days, for a travelling showman to have a row with the military. He'd have gone for Ehrenstein with his great hams of fists, and Ehrenstein would have stuck a sword through him without a thought or any enquiry afterwards. That's odd, too, according to our notions; but they called it the 'honour of the Army' then." I nodded, remembering several notorious cases.

"Well, the show moved up into the Zillerthal in the Tyrol. It was the holiday season, and the places in the hills crammed with tourists and climbers, besides several big shooting-boxes belonging to the nobility, who had their parties too. We looked to do well, making one-day stands from pitch to pitch, and we *were* doing well, but Helga wasn't laughing any more. The audiences felt there was something wrong, and so did Marshal Radetzky; he turned sulky, and sometimes got quite out of hand in the ring. I had a hunch what was at the bottom of it, for at our last two stands I'd seen Ritter von Ehrenstein hanging round our tents—in mufti, with his glasses, he didn't look the fine bird he did in uniform, not by chalks; hang-dog, rather. At last, seeing Helga's pale face looking transparent with worry, I begged her to treat me, though

an Englishman, as a pal, and say what was wrong; perhaps I might hit on a way to help her. Then she broke down and blurted it all out to me, and I tell you, it made me go prickly hot all over with rage as I listened to her. It appeared that it wasn't just because of being girl-mad that this pretty soldier-man was hunting her down in such a blackguard way. No: he owned it, he'd made a bet with his brother-officers in the mess that she'd lower her colours to him, as he put it, before the circus left the district. Seemed he had a reputation to keep up in this line; and anyhow, he told her flatly, he couldn't afford to pay what he'd lose all round to the mess if he didn't carry it off."

"Did he think that would melt her?"

"There was nothing soft about it anywhere, my boy. I told you Rudi couldn't shut his hands tight on his makings, didn't I? Some time before, he'd backed a bill for a friend in the profession, like the warm-hearted fool that he was. He believed the matter had all been settled, but it hadn't. That bit of paper goes from hand to hand till a Jew firm in Vienna gets hold of it. They have an agent in Innsbruck, who is instructed to look out for Linden's circus coming along. He hears they are up in the Zillerthal and takes the train to go and dun Rudi for the debt. In the carriage coming up he falls in with Ehrenstein. The agent shakes his tongue a bit too free; and the next thing is, he hurries back to Innsbruck with a cheque in his pocket for his principal, and Ehrenstein has the bill.

"Now," says he to Helga, "now, I don't want to have to break up your prosperous tour and perhaps sell up your husband and his show. But I know you can't either of you pay, and so, if you're sensible, you'll do what I ask, and you shall have the bill to burn. It's agreed," he goes on, "with my friends that I shall bring back to show them that enamel locket of a lover's knot you always wear on a red ribbon round your neck when you ride."

"That little trinket," the old clown broke off to explain, "was the first present Rudi had given her when courting her; she wore it always in the ring as a sort of mascot, with no other ornament, and the crimson ribbon showed up on her dark habit as if it had been a royal order—very impressive. Everyone who knew anything about her would understand what her giving it away would mean; and Ehrenstein told her brutally she must find her own explanation of its disappearance for her husband. I couldn't think what to advise when she had done telling me. I asked how much the bill was for, and I think it ran to something near £200 of our money. I said, 'Your only hope is that, if we have an extra good week, Rudi, if you tell him the bill has been presented, may be able to scrape up enough to pay. And you've a chance,' I told her, 'if we fill the house both shows on Saturday at Rotenfels; for all the biggest hotels in the neighbourhood are round there and one or two swagger hunting-lodges, so we ought to draw a wealthy crowd.'

"But, poor Helga! Her luck seemed dead out. On the Saturday morning at Rotenfels she was rehearsing Marshal Radetzky. We had a grass ring under a tent, and after a lot of rain the night before, there was a slippery, muddy patch by the entrance. The Marshal reared up, playful-like, coming into the ring; his hind-legs slipped under him and he comes down on poor Helga. If she'd been riding a man's saddle, as they most of 'em do to-day, she'd most likely have slid off on to her feet. But she had the old heavy side-saddle; she couldn't disentangle herself in time and the pommels drove into her. Well, it was lucky she wasn't killed. The doctor we found for her said she hadn't broken any ribs by a miracle, but had bruised herself internally pretty badly. So there was no chance of her riding, and no chance of good houses at Rotenfels; for who was going to come over mountain roads to see our show with Helga and the Marshal both out of it?"

"I went to see her, lying strapped up in bed in her waggon; tried to cheer her and Rudi up (he was in a worse state than she was) and came down the steps of the waggon feeling as blue as washing-day. Then, I saw two ladies coming over the grass towards me, with alpenstocks and Tyrolean hats—been on a mountain ramble evidently."

"Has there been an accident, Sir?" asks the one who was walking in front, a dark woman with a mighty pleasant voice. I could see she had gold earrings and was a swell of some sort.

"A bad accident, Fräulein," I answers, "and our show's ruined," and I went on to tell her what had happened. When I had done, her friend, a tall, slim creature with funny, rather vacant eyes, who'd been prodding the turf with her stick and gazing round the hills as if she were trying to count the peaks, without seeming to listen to me a bit, suddenly turned round and asked me, "Won't the great stallion appear at all, then?"

"There's no one but Frau Linden can ride Marshal Radetzky," I informed her. She kind of stiffened. "No one?" she said. "That remains to be seen. Marie," she turned to her friend, "I think the chance of my life has come!"

The dark woman gives a start. "You can't mean, my dear—" she begins with a horrified look.

"Why not?" interrupts the other, like ice. "Haven't I paid enough for training? Am I not bored enough at Rotenfels in that stuffy lodge? Can't I be of some use to somebody for once?" She turns her head sharp to me. "Where's the proprietor? Fetch him here immediately." I stared at her, not knowing what to make of the business.

"Well, but don't you hear?" raps out the dark woman excitedly. "Run, quick!" She had a way with her, this one, that meant she was used to being obeyed; so I plunged back into the waggon and dragged

out Rudi. He was so stupefied at first, the poor devil, that he couldn't understand anything. But at last he made out the tall woman wanted to try Marshal Radetzky at once, and, if she could manage him, take Helga's place in the show. He thought she was mad, and very respectfully asked her what she knew about riding and where she had been trained. Quite calmly she gave the names of three of the biggest *haute école* teachers on the Continent at the time. It came to my mind then that I'd heard the Vienna society ladies had been making a craze of circus-riding for some time past, giving private shows and so on; so I whispered to him, "Let her rehearse if she wants to; it's her risk."

"Don't whisper, man!" cries the tall woman suddenly, stepping back with her queer eyes all alight with suspicious little flames. "What are you plotting? Speak!"

"Her friend puts out a hand as if to calm her, and says: "Let us speak to your wife, Herr Linden; we shall be able to arrange it with her, I am sure."

"She seemed all of a trouble, darting her eyes to her friend and back again, then looking round nervously, as though she were afraid someone was coming after them. "Would you like to see the poor woman?" she said at last, eyeing the other one in a doubtful way.

"Rudi and I followed her look, and saw the tall lady actually smoking a cigarette. Well, of course, that's usual now; but it wasn't then, though some of the Hungarian countesses were known to do it. She seemed all vague again, and the dark lady had to touch her arm and speak to her in a low voice for some minutes, before she followed into the waggon, Rudi opening the door for her with a face that I, as a clown, quite envied.

"I squatted down on the grass and waited. After nearly an hour, the door opened again and out came Helga in her hat and habit. I jumped up with a shout of surprise, and then I saw it wasn't Helga at all, but the tall lady wearing Helga's things. She'd really taken me in. When she heard me shout, she stepped back and glowered at me again. "Marie," she called excitedly to her friend, "I can't have all these sheep's-heads staring at me. Find me a thicker veil than this, to cover my face right up—"

The old clown took off his spectacles and nodded solemnly into the past. "We went down to the show-tent and, would you believe it, this stranger woman mastered the Marshal the first go off. Rudi showed her what paces he was used to in the act, and she rode him at both performances with immense applause. We was full at the first show, crowded out at the second. One or two things, I could see, were not quite right; but she knew the business well enough, and pulled him through, better the second time than the first."

"What did the audience think?"



"Von Ehrenstein fell on his knees to take the ribbon and the badge, and Helga now saw it was an 'E' with a double eagle and a crown."

"They thought she was Helga. They were both much of a size, and she had the thick veil she had asked for over her face. That puzzled 'em a bit, and made them all the more keen. Two or three officers, who had come up from the garrison in uniform, were teasing her with opera-glasses all the time; I could see she hated it, kept turning her head away."

"And the red ribbon?"

"They saw that, too, all right. It was a complete take-in."

"And by an amateur?"

"H'm—yes; but the strangest part's to come. Some of it, I saw; but the rest Helga told me when it was all over. As soon as the show was finished, while Rudi, according to his custom, was counting over and storing up the money in the ticket waggon—it took him longer than usual that evening—von Ehrenstein, very smart in white tunic and silver spurs, clinks round to Helga's living-waggon and raps at the door. He pushes in without waiting for leave, and says loudly to the strange woman, still in Helga's habit, 'Well, and what's my answer? Time's up, my lady!'

"Then he catches sight of Helga herself lying on the bed, and stares about him, flummoxed. 'It wasn't you that rode this evening?' he cries, 'then who—?' He stares hard again at the woman in the riding-habit. 'Gnädige Fräulein,' he says with one of his killing grins, 'won't you complete the double pleasure by removing your veil?' She was standing very still and upright, and Helga said she had, all in a moment, turned somehow different. Helga herself felt so frightened, that she wanted to stand up, only she couldn't move. She saw the stranger put her hands up slowly and unwind the veil. As it fell, the officer jumped back as if he had been shot, and came to attention with a face whiter than his tunic and looking as if a poker had been shoved down his spine.

"Hauptmann Ritter von Ehrenstein," says the unknown in a voice that reminded Helga, so she said, of delicate glass breaking, 'you have a bill you wish to give Frau Linden; do so.'

"To Helga's amazement the officer brings out his morocco pocket-book with shaking fingers and hands her over the paper without a syllable. 'Thank you,' says the lady with a little bow of her head, which he answers with a jerky salute.

"In return," she goes on, 'you were to receive, you hoped, a token on a red ribbon.' He still said not a word; and Helga, by the swinging lamp of the caravan, actually saw his thin face flush. The strange lady unfastened the red ribbon she was wearing round her neck and held it out. A little silver monogram sparkled at the end of it.

"'You will show this,' says the tall lady, 'to your brother-officers, and tell them that a certain wager, unworthy of men of honour, is cancelled—by order of their Colonel-in-Chief.'

"Von Ehrenstein fell on his knees to take the ribbon and the badge, and Helga now saw it was an 'E' with a double-eagle and a crown. Then. . . . I wonder if you will believe the rest?

"A carriage with outriders in uniform and Jaegers in green Tyrolese livery swept over the grass and halted with yellow lamps shining outside the showman's battered waggon; I saw it come, from where I was watching between some trees. The door was opened by one of the Jaegers and a little old man in hunting dress with a monkey face and fuzzy white whiskers sprang out alertly and hurried up the steps of the caravan,

"Elizabeth!"
I heard him cry,
as he entered.
'What does this
mean? Are you
unhurt?' Helga
inside saw von
Ehrenstein stiffen
in the most rigid
salute he had yet
given.

"I am perfectly safe, Franz," said the lady. "I came on an errand of help to one of our people in great distress. You will not blame me for that?"

"But to put yourself in such danger, unattended! Where is Countess Marie Loredo?" cried the old gentleman.

"I relied for protection," said the lady, fixing those cold eyes on von Ehrenstein, 'on the honour of an officer of my own 19th Imperial-Royal Hussar Regiment, and he did not fail me.'

"And she walked straight out to the carriage without a word more to anyone; Helga felt that she had already forgotten her completely.

"There was a great crowd then gathered round the outriders in the dark, waiting; for it had gone about like a wind who our exalted visitors were, and I could hear the cheers running right

through the night as they drove away through the pine woods under the glittering cold stars."

"And the people knew," I asked incredulously, "that their Empress had ridden in a country circus?"

"Well," said the old clown, with a quizzical grimace, "they knew the Empress had visited the circus. Whether they knew enough, as Court circles in Vienna might have done, of her private craze for circus-riding, and her queer, uncontrollable character (some folk used the word insanity, but that was cruel)—whether they knew enough, I say, to guess that she was the veiled lady they had seen on Marshal Radetzky, I shouldn't like to assert. But they were very loyal in any case, and you may take it from me that Rudi was too big a gentleman to do what some might have done, and for ever afterwards put on his bills 'Linden's Imperial-Royal Circus.'"

[THE END.]



"She walked straight out to the carriage without a word more to anyone."



THE MIRACLE OF THE PEACH-TREE.

By BARBARA BINGLEY.

SIKKIM, Bhutan, and Thibet, these are the lands of faery forests, strange and beautiful countries inhabited by devils, great and small, and kindly, talkative folk, who will, on occasion, tell a traveller tales of the miraculous. These stories all recount the prowess of the Lord Buddha, who, when he rose from his Lotus Throne in the mountains beyond the Shali, came to the lands of the Thunderbolt in order to subdue the evil ones who dwelt there.

It is said that these spirits forsook the plain, where the wickedness of men was already so great that the demons found no occupation, and accordingly flew to the mountains to tempt the pure hearts of the hill-men. It seemed to me, however, that, although the Incarnation of Excellence was invariably victorious in his encounters, there must have been many spirits who successfully avoided, either conversion by his golden voice, or death by his magic arrows. The presence of these devils was everywhere apparent. From the hand-rails of the bridges fluttered votive banners scrawled over with propitiatory prayers; certain trees were mysteriously garlanded; and in the monastery of La-chung the walls surrounding the great gilt image of Buddha were painted with the forms of innumerable lesser deities. I myself was on my way to visit one of these godlings, Chabdii of the healing well, and as I followed the forest path leading to Yeumthang, I wondered if amongst the good people of Thibet there were any who still followed the Most Excellent Way, or if the simple and beautiful teaching of Gautama had been completely superseded by devil-worship.

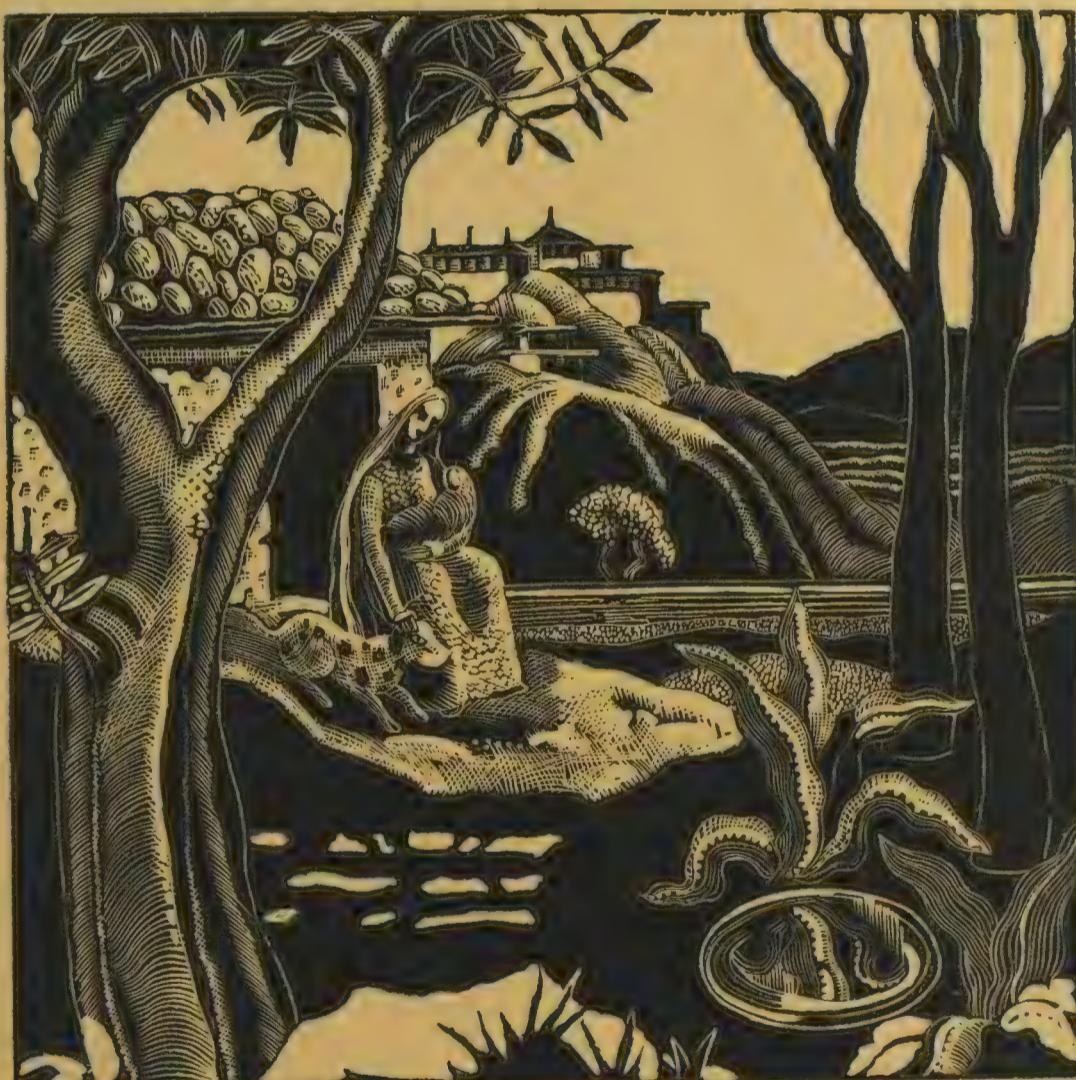
I took a side path, and, stumbling amongst the boulders on the hill-side, I came upon a shelter, stone-walled and roofed with branches, from whose door blew clouds of sulphur-smelling smoke. It was the hostel of Chabdii, where any man may come and cure the ills of his body in the healing springs. As I drew near, a Lama came out of the hut. He was an old man, clad in the madder-coloured robes of the Red Hat brotherhood. When he lifted up his hand to give me the "Blessing of the Stranger," I saw inset into his garment the pieces of rich brocade signifying he was no common priest, but an Abbot of the second order. He limped as he walked, and leant upon the shoulder of a little boy, evidently his Getu or disciple.

"O Kusho," I enquired, "how did the foot of the Most Excellent one come to be thus crushed; and has the most honourable Lama come from afar to bathe in the healing waters?"

Wood Blocks by LETTICE SANDFORD.

"Aye, Kusho," he answered. "I have come from Pamionchi, which is eight days' journey, and as for my foot, a great rock fell upon it. Doubtless some devil, wishing to do me evil, entered into the stone, for it came from I know not where, leaping and bounding upon the hillside; and such is the vanity of the body that for pain I could no longer meditate, wherefore the High Abbot bade me come to this place, and, bathing in these waters, cure my ills that I might follow again in the Way. I am Ming Ma Tsering," he added, "and this," he patted the head of the child by his side, "is my Getu. . . . Go, Little One, and fetch both mawa* and fruit for this Kusho."

The boy ran into the hut obediently, and brought out a bamboo jar of millet-beer and, in a woven basket, some small sour oranges. The Lama, gathering his heavy draperies about him, sat down on the little ledge in front of the hut, and motioned me to come beside him. At his gesture, the stony place became a throne of honour, and I took my seat with the humility of one who sits by some great man. We spoke of many things together there, as we watched the slow dance of the clouds wreathing and unwreathing themselves about the shining snow-peaks which rose above us. Then, in a pause between our grave discussions on crops and weather, landslide and road, I noticed below us the delicate boughs of a fruit-tree in blossom. The month was October, and I was amazed to see spring flowers gleaming between the autumn colours. I turned and asked the Lama if it were a peach-tree. He smiled indulgently, "Nay, Kusho, those are the flowers of the bitter almond. The peach-tree has once bloomed out of her



"Ye shall find a woman with a child upon her knee."

season, but that was by the favour of the Lord Buddha himself. Does the honoured stranger not know the story?" I shook my head, settled myself among the dried ferns, and watched the late sunshine flash on the silver disc of the Lama's prayer-wheel as he turned it monotonously.

His face was passive and benign, with high cheek-bones, and the copper-coloured skin was patterned and furrowed with a thousand wrinkles. "Long, long ago," he began, "before the Chinese had come to trouble the good people of Thibet, it was revealed to the Holy One, the Dalai Lama, that his spirit would soon find release. Therefore he, who was the eighth incarnation of the Bodhisat, called unto himself all the great Lamas, the noblemen, and the counsellors. And also with them Keng Ga, his faithful servitor, who from the hour when as a child he had been

made Dalai Lama, had placed each day beneath his feet the golden footstool of his office.

"When all were assembled, the Holy One spake: 'O Lamas and Counsellors, and you my faithful Keng Ga, listen: My spirit, which is the spirit of the Lord Buddha, shall find again its earthly resting place in the heart of a child. This child shall be born within an hour of my death, wherefore, O Lamas, I charge ye to search throughout the length and breadth of the land for him who shall come after me. In Sikkim and in Bhutan, in Thibet and on the borders of China ye shall search, and by these signs ye shall know when your quest is ended. Ye shall find set among the high hills a lake which is bluer than my great turquoise, and upon its banks there shall stand a peach-tree flowering in the season of red leaves, when all her sister trees are stripped and bare. Beneath this tree ye shall find a house with a great dog before the door, who, greeting you with kindness, shall neither rend your garments nor show any anger at your approach. Within this hut ye shall find a woman with a child upon her knee, and my spirit, which is the spirit of the Most Excellent Law, shall be within him, and he will become the ninth Dalai Lama, the Incarnation of Wisdom.'

"When he had spoken these words, his soul loosed itself from his body and departed. Now when the ceremonies and the mourning were at an end, the four chief Lamas and the faithful Keng Ga set forth upon their quest. They searched from the fortress of Tongsa Jong to the walled city of Leh, from the Great Wall of China to the Leptcha huts of Tumlong; and when at length, spent and weary, they crossed the snowy path of Seeboola, they came suddenly upon a lake lying between a fold of the high hills. Its colour was that of the Dalai Lama's turquoise, and even as the Holy One had foretold, there stood upon its banks a peach-tree flowering in the season of dead leaves. Beneath the tree was a house, and before the door a dog with kindness in its heart. Then Keng Ga opened the door and beheld, seated inside the house, a woman with a child upon her knee, and when the child saw Keng Ga it held out its arms

and touched an amulet which the Dalai Lama had bound about his neck. Wherefore the souls of the four Lamas were filled with a great peace, and when they learned the child had been born within an hour of the Holy One's death they made obeisance before the spirit of the Lord which had been reincarnated in the child."

The Lama paused, and with his eyes fixed on the far silver peaks which floated above a sea of pale mist, seemed lost in an ecstasy of simple devotion. It was even as if his spirit, turning upon the wheel of time, had been made one with the souls of the four Lamas, and that he too worshipped with them beneath the peach-tree. He was silent so long that the little Getu, boylike, loosened a stone, and wondering whether it would go, flung it down the hillside, where it was lost in the misty veils which shrouded the river and the trees of the valley.

"And so, Kusho?" I broke in on his pious reverie.

"And so," he took up the story, "the Lamas brought the little one and his mother to Lhasa; but there they found many other women whose babes had also been born in the hour of the Dalai Lama's death. And since it is our custom that such babes be proved by a ritual ordained,

the Tashi Lama commanded that they should remain in Lhasa until they had known four summers, and could both speak and understand. When the time was come, the great ra-dongs* sounded before the gates of the palace, and the priests beat drums and clashed cymbals together, summoning all the people. At the appointed hour they came to the hall of the palace. Now this hall is larger than any dwelling upon the earth, and its pillars are carved and painted in the semblance of those devils whom the Excellent One subdued, even as he subdued Shi Ma, the evil female devil of La-Chung.

"All manner of folk came into the hall, the wives of the rich men wearing pearls upon their heads, and the daughters of the poor with garlands about their necks. The children who had been born in the hour of the Dalai Lama's death stood with their mothers before the golden image of the Lord Buddha. Then the Tashi Lama commanded certain priests to lay before the children all manner of beautiful treasures. It befell that the other children stretched forth their hands and grasped at bright jewels or snuff-bottles, but when twenty thumb-rings were laid before the child of the peach-tree, he chose from amongst them that one which had adorned the Dalai Lama's hand; and from ten cups of jade, he touched the one from which the holy Lama had drunk before he died.

"Whereupon, the Lamas, the noblemen, and all the people worshipped the Incarnation of Excellence, the Jewel in the Lotus. The ra-dongs sounded, and the people rejoiced, for he who had been but a little child was proven God. In his worship and his honour they danced the Dance of the Black Hat, and the Dance of the Vanquished Ghouls, and the three lands of the thunderbolt made merry for many days. The child became the ninth Dalai Lama, a ruler temperate and wise, learned in all things . . ."

The Lama's deep voice rose in the rhythmic invocation of his faith. "Om mane padme hum . . . Om mane padme hum . . ." And the childish treble of the little Getu mingled in the chant, whilst Chabdii muttered and hissed in the well of healing behind us. The mountains flamed in the

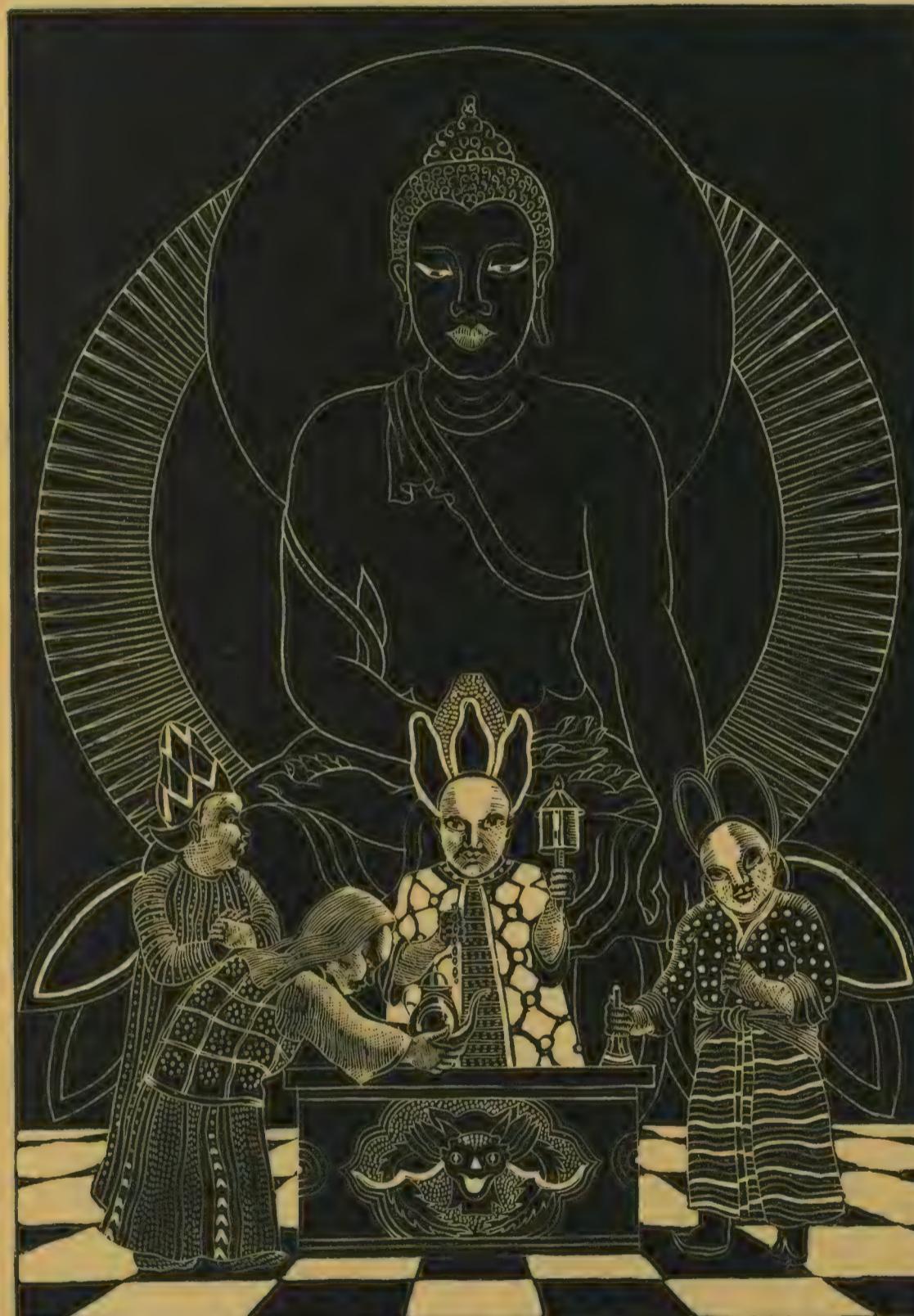
exquisite light of the setting sun, and as the evening wind blew gustily up the gorge, the Lama rose, blessed me gravely, and disappeared into the hut, sweeping up his crimson draperies, and leaning upon the shoulder of the Getu.

As I clambered down the hill on my way to the scattered huts of the Yak herds at Yeumthang, I saw that the ground beneath the almond tree was carpeted with delicate fallen blossom, and I wondered if the mother of the ninth Dalai Lama, like the mother of another Holy Child, had "kept all these things and pondered them in her heart," and if, gazing into the faces of those devout Lamas, she feared that her baby, like her peach-tree, would suffer for its unnatural flowering.

Poor little Priest and King, his whole life caged by ceremony, his every action ruled by a ritual pre-ordained for centuries, his childhood flowering out of season amongst the faces of grave old Lamas sere and brown as the withered leaves! The vision was dark, but I comforted myself with the thought that perhaps the faithful Keng Ga watched over him, and that the dog with "kindness in his heart," was sometimes allowed to play inside the dragon-guarded portals of the palace.

[THE END.]

* Trumpet.



"Poor little Priest and King, his whole life caged by ceremony."



Sarah Bernhardt.



*Notre-Dame
des Sept-Douleurs.*



Berthe.



The Archangel.



*The Knave
of Hearts.*



*Notre-Dame
du Joli-Mai.*



William the Conqueror.



The Siren.



Velleda.



Queen Mathilda.



*Notre-Dame
du Bel-Ete.*

The Brothers and Sisters of the Little Lights.

THE tiny candles flickering amid the green of the Christmas tree: what are they? "Paraffin wax and cotton wicks," sniff the prosaic. "Fairy lights," croon the Peters and the Wendys. The believers in Tinker Bell are right! And now the slender tapers have big brothers and big sisters to flaunt and flame before them, watch over them and defend them. Here they are—fine, coloured Skeltoreans; of the Heavens heavenly, of the Earth earthy, even of the Waters witching!

*From the Candles Modelled and Coloured
by Mme. Delarue-Mardrus.*

Everyday Types of a Hundred Years Ago.

By DOROTHY MARGARET STUART.

Reproductions from "The Costume of Great Britain" by W. H. Pyne (1808) and "Picturesque Representations of the Dress and Manners of the English" (1814.)

WE all fall into errors about the past; we all hold to them most tenaciously till somebody points out that we are wrong—and sometimes after that. We imagine that life in the Middle Ages was one vast Canterbury Pilgrimage, chequered by a few agreeable tournaments in the manner of Malory; we conceive eighteenth-century London as being at once as grimy as Dr. Johnson's Fleet Street and as graceful as Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill. And we are

[Continued below on left.]



THE LIFE-BOAT.
An early craft of the simple type designed by Greathead; manned by a crew in motley dress.

always thinking of things as having been either much better or much worse than they can possibly have been at any given time.

In nothing are we more misguided than in our fixed idea that, lacking those inestimable blessings, the cinema and the penny Press, our great-great-grandfathers must have found the world a dull place. "What's the matter with us chaps," said a modern navvy to a sympathetic clergyman, "is ee-noo-ee"? The flight from ennui has become a stampede. We are all in deadly terror of this pursuing monster whose very existence was unsuspected by our ancestors. The children who paid their halfpennies for a peep into the raree-man's box were

[Continued below on right.]



THE FIREMAN.
An employee of the "Sun" Insurance Company, whose badge he wears.



THE SELLER OF SALOOP—"THE PRECOCIOUS HERB-WOMAN'S DARLING."
Saloop was the "delight of the early gardener," and was a "soft" drink, brewed from sassafras, which was consumed principally by the lower classes in the early hours of the morning. It is honourably mentioned in the "Essays of Elia."

not languid children athirst for a thrill. They probably got more out of that ecstatic look than their descendants do out of the most harrowing detective film. And it is possible that the showman himself enjoyed patching together his poor little static pageant more heartily than Herr Reinhardt and Mr. C. B. Cochran now enjoy staging epics and revues. His players were more docile than theirs are wont to be, and his audiences less exacting.

It is rumoured that small boys aspire to be engine-drivers no longer. Does the craft of the bill-sticker cease to charm? The bills he had to stick were less gay and complicated a hundred years since, but it must always have been a pleasant sight to see him plunge his big brush into the clotted grey paste and then flap it rhythmically to and fro upon a hoarding or a wall. The lamp-lighter has ceased to be a figure of romance, to be watched for and rhymed about, since the greater lamps turned into sizzling, violet-white moons and

the lesser learned to blink at the touch of an upthrust pole. There was something infinitely more intimate and personal in the task of the man who went to his work with a ladder and an oil-can, and a great pair of shears to trim the wicks withal. Hogarth set him on his ladder in St. James's Street so that he might watch the Rake being haled out of his sedan chair by the myrmidons of the law. Fifty years later we find that the lamplighter has an acolyte, a small boy to carry the big oil-can from which the little containers are filled. Surely not an unhappy small boy!

The passing of years—and of Acts of Parliament—has done much to diminish the number of small boys working, wandering, and wondering in our streets. They swarmed there when the nineteenth century was young. Blue Coat boys drew the tickets in the State lotteries, and the ponderous sledges conveying the lottery wheels from Somerset House to Coopers' Hall were officially escorted by Guardsmen and unofficially by admiring urchins. Boys ran hither and thither with newspapers all limp and smudgy from the press, and tooted on their tin horns to catch the ears of any possible patrons whose eyes had not already been



THE HALFPENNY SHOWMAN.

A peep-show—crude precursor of the cinema in juvenile favour.



THE BILL-STICKER ON HIS ROUND.

The bill-sticker was the avenue of publicity for interesting events such as public lotteries, in the days when these were a legitimate way of raising funds.



THE LAMP-LIGHTER—WITH HIS BOY.

Tending one of the oil-lamps which lighted London at night and won the admiration of foreign visitors before the days of "gas candles."

caught by the scrawled placards fixed on their dilapidated hats. There were undertakers' boys—was not Oliver Twist one such?—and waggoners' boys—was not Sam Weller "a vagginner's boy vunce"? And there were the little chimney-sweeping boys, made immortal by two Charleses, Kingsley and Lamb.

Colour had not then begun to fade out of all the familiar scenes. The thin red seam down the trousers of the modern postman is a poor relic of the scarlet, blue-collared, and blue-cuffed coat of his forerunner; and the letters he brings us are all too seldom bespattered with gay red discs of wax. Nor does he, by wearing top-boots, create the exciting illusion that he himself has carried the royal mails all the way from Dover or Bristol or York. That was the habit of the postman who delivered the letters when Nelson's midshipmen and Wellington's ensigns wrote home. The modern dustman, though his headgear has a certain Anglo-Saxon simplicity, neither wears red velvet breeches nor rings a clanging hand-bell. Those were the habits of the stout fellows who collected the rubbish from Mr. Fox's house and Mr. Pitt's.

Yet it is an error, and a common one, to think that all

the colour has faded out now. For example, there are two types, each associated with the noble business of saving human life, which came into being about the same time and have not lost their picturesqueness even in these days. The fireman who sported upon his clumsy hat of horse-hide and upon his arm the brass badge of the Insurance Company employing him could not compete with his modern representative, helmeted like Minerva — or Britannia! The lifeboatmen who manned the craft launched by the amiable Sir Cuthbert Heron in 1789 were no more romantic than are the lifeboatmen who to-day go forth often enough in kindred boats, to succour such ships as those brave north-

[Continued below.]



THE LOTTERY WHEEL.

Conveying a lottery wheel from Somerset Place to Coopers' Hall (where the tickets were drawn) on a sledge; under the escort of a detachment of Guards.



THE NEWSMAN
With a bill in his hat instead
of a placard.

THE POSTMAN
Who made a daily delivery in
London between 10 a.m. & 12.

countrymen never dreamt of. Nevertheless it is true that our raiment is less comely, our pastimes are more hectic, our way of life is more mechanical, than theirs who went before. Even our soft drinks have lost something of their savour, and have become insipid and oversweet. Saloop — does anyone know what saloop tastes like? What it is lovers of Elia will not need to be told. It is a sort of tisane, brewed from sassafras and drunk hot. Old women used to sell it in the London streets "in the dead time of the dawn," when the watchman's lantern 'gan to pale its ineffectual fire and the chimney-sweep on his matutinal



THE DUSTMAN.
The picturesque predecessor of the modern scavenger, who
carried a bell.

path, the cherry-girl going to market, the drummer-boy bound for the parade-ground, would pause to patronise her wares. She and her wares and her patrons between them gave Charles Lamb the wherewithal for one of the most charming passages in all his London essays.

"This is saloop — the precocious herb-woman's darling — the delight of the early gardener, who transports his smoking cabbages by break of day from Hammersmith to Covent Garden's famed piazzas — the delight, and oh, I fear, too often the envy of the unpennied sweep. Him shouldst thou haply encounter with his dim visage pendent over the grateful steam, regale him with

[Continued below.]

a sumptuous basin (it will cost thee but three halfpennies) and a slice of delicate bread-and-butter (an added halfpenny) . . ."

Or, he might have added, a slab of gingerbread, for gingerbread, too, had a place on the saloop-woman's wheeled stall, beside her tall copper urn, with the lambent furnace beneath, the sugar-tin, the ever-ready ladle, and all the other utensils of her kindly calling. Perhaps Lord Shaftesbury, when he redeemed her sooty-visaged little clients from bondage, incidentally and all-unwittingly quenched those cheerful flames and dispersed that grateful steam for ever.



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"A LITTLE CHILD WITH LAUGHING LOOK,
A LOVELY WHITE, UNWRITTEN BOOK."

John Masefield.

FROM THE PASTEL BY JOHN RUSSELL, R.A. (1745-1806.)



A ROD IN PICKLE FOR THE DUTCH!

"MR. PEPYS AT CHATHAM." BY ARTHUR D. MCCORMICK.

After the Academy Picture entitled "Mr. Pitman, Surveyor-General of the Victualling Office, at Chatham, 25th March, 1666."

"And to Your Praises, Sir, the whole Ocean bears witness; which You covered with such a powerfull Fleet as has been able to defy the rage of its most formidable Enemys as well as of the Waves. You, with a felicity beyond any Daedalus, added such a strength to your Shipping as rendered the Sailor at once safe, and secure of glory. You have truly encompassed Brittain with wooden Walls, and by Your care alone, whether wee would go on in quest of new Discoverys or to enlarge our Conquests, wee may extend our Sails to either Pole."—[From the Latin Diploma presented to Pepys by the University of Oxford; as recorded by John Drinkwater.]



"THE MILLER'S TALE."

"From Every Shires Ende of Engelond to Caunterbury They Wende."

Chaucer.

FROM THE ACADEMY PICTURE BY MEREDITH W. HAWES, A.R.C.A.



THE WAITING-PLACE FOR GUESTS AT THE TEA CEREMONY: WHERE THE JOY OF SHARING HOSPITALITY IS EXPRESSED BY THOSE INVITED TO A CHA-NO-YU PARTY.

"The guests invited to a *cha-no-yu* party assemble in the waiting-place before they are formally received in the tea-room. The waiting-place, which is situated in a convenient part of the garden, is usually a small one-room house with three or four mats. The guests greet one another as they arrive and express the joy of sharing hospitality. This picture represents the interior of the waiting-room, where the guests are expected to inspect and admire the various articles displayed there before the host comes to announce that he is ready to receive them in the tea-room. A sunken fire-box is shown, with the iron kettle in which water is kept boiling. Tea is not served in this room, but there are cups for serving a flavoured hot water. Placed on a small, deep tray there is a fire-pot which is provided for the guests to light tobacco. Only the lower part of a hanging scroll is shown in this picture. All these articles are selected specially for the occasion, and the host is naturally proud of them."

THE ETIQUETTE OF A CUP OF TEA.

Cha-no-yu: The Tea Ceremony of Japan, a "Secular Pastime."

By YASUNOSUKE FUKUKITA. ☰

With Pictures by SAITEN TAMURA.



CHA-NO-YU, which is somewhat misleadingly known as the Tea Ceremony of Japan, is unique and is peculiar to Japan. Now a secular pastime, it was originally a monastic practice introduced from China by Buddhist monks of the Zen sect. In China the custom of using powdered tea is forgotten; and it remains in Japan as a cult of aesthetic entertainment. The love of simplicity and individuality which is a characteristic of the Japanese tea cult may be traced to the Zen traditions, laying stress on self-concentration and introspection. *Cha-no-yu* is usually spoken of as Ceremonial Tea or Tea Ceremony, but it is not merely a mystical and complicated cult or ritual. True, there is an elaborate set of rules for serving and drinking powdered tea, but, on the other hand, the freest exercise of imagination is not incompatible with strict formality. A person without original ideas and distinctive individuality would make a very dull and uninteresting *cha-jin*, or tea-man. In *cha-no-yu*, tea is, so to speak, an excuse for appreciating art and worshipping nature.

To serve powdered tea, it is put in a bowl much larger than an ordinary tea-cup, and hot water is poured over it. In the case of *koi-cha*, or thick tea, the mixture is carefully kneaded by pressing the bamboo whisk against the bowl. A greater quantity of hot water is used to serve *usu-cha*, or thin tea, the mixture in this case being vigorously stirred up or beaten to make it frothy. Shuko, the "Father of the Tea Ceremony," was the first man to formulate a set of rules for serving and drinking powdered tea, and his patron, Yoshimasa, "the Japanese Lorenzo de' Medici," took interest in the simple and charming way of conducting *cha-no-yu* which characterised him.

There are many ways of giving a *cha-no-yu* entertainment, according to different occasions and seasons. Powdered tea is often served informally without invitation, and the host may or may not offer any meal.

Or else a large *cha-no-yu* party may be held in a big room either formally or informally. A garden-party is sometimes arranged to entertain hundreds of guests with powdered tea. But let us imagine that we are invited to a noon party in the autumn or spring. There are five guests, of whom the principal, called *shokyaku*, functions as leader.

As the guests arrive one by one and assemble in the *yoritsuki*, or waiting-room, they greet one another, expressing the joy of sharing the hospitality of their host. This is, perhaps, a small room with three mats, but the guests are expected to inspect and admire the various articles arranged in the room. Indifference is a deadly sin, and the host will be greatly disappointed if his guests fail to take interest in anything shown, or are incapable of appreciating his thoughtfulness in arranging the smallest details of the entertainment. In due time the host comes, and quietly opens the paper sliding-door. He makes a deep bow and retraces his steps to the tea-room without saying anything to the guests. This silent salutation is understood to mean that the host is ready to receive the guests in the tea-room. *Shokyaku*, who is qualified for leadership, heads the procession to the tea-room in single file and holds the responsible position until the entertainment is over, which usually takes about four hours.

Roji, or the garden-path between the waiting-place and the tea-room, may not be longer than twenty feet, but this is a spot where the Japanese art of landscape gardening creates an atmosphere conducive to a peaceful and contemplative frame of mind, so necessary to enjoy or appreciate the entertainment in the tea-room. Rocks, trees, stone lanterns, and so forth, are skilfully arranged to form a charming combination of nature and art. The whole thing is highly artistic, but not artificial, if the garden is the work of a first-class landscape artist and is under his constant care.



THE FLOWER-VASE IN THE TEA-ROOM: THE ALCOVE BEFORE WHICH EACH GUEST KNEELS "IN ORDER TO APPRECIATE RESPECTFULLY THE CHOICE OF THE VASE AND FLOWER MADE BY THE HOST."

"This picture represents a section of the tea-room and shows the alcove, on the wall of which we find a spray of white camellia tastefully arranged in an antique bamboo vase. This arrangement is severely simple but none the less highly effective, and only a tea-master or a person properly trained knows how to make it. There is another way of placing the vase on the raised platform of the alcove. But in either case the principles of effective simplicity are to be observed. On entering the tea-room, each guest is expected to kneel one by one in front of the alcove in order to appreciate respectfully the choice of the vase and flower made by the host.

Flowers a little bit early in the season may be appropriate, but anything grown in a hot-house is to be avoided."

Communion with nature is expected of those about to enter the tea-room, and the procession is silent; for the guests' serenity of mind is not to be disturbed. As they approach the tea-room, they come to a point where there is a stone basin close by a stone lantern. The stone basin, which is filled with water or is kept replenished by running water from a bamboo pipe, is a washing-place provided for the guests to purify themselves before entering the tea-room. Of course, the leader starts the formality of purification, and he is the first man to enter the room. The other guests come to the basin one by one to wash their hands and rinse their mouths. This is the most important part of the garden path, and the guests are supposed to be capable of appreciating the pains-taking ingenuity of an artist of rocks, trees, and water.

The common or standard area of a *cha-shitsu* is four-and-a-half mats, measuring approximately 9.5 feet square. Smaller rooms are not uncommon, and in nearly all cases the uninitiated will be disappointed with the unimpressive and almost barren exterior and interior. It requires some training to discover subtle beauty and refinement hidden underneath apparent poverty. The entrance to the tea-room is so small that the guests have to creep in.

Each guest kneels in front of the *tokonoma* (alcove) and looks reverentially at the *kakemono*. In the cult of powdered tea, there is a rule not to have at the same time both the hanging scroll and flower arrangement in the alcove. Those not versed in the classical literature of Japan and China may not be able to appreciate the appropriateness of the inscription on the hanging scroll, but any person with an ordinary artistic sense will be struck with the simple but highly effective and refined arrangement of flowers which the guests will find in place of the *kakemono* when they come back for the second session. There is nothing gorgeous or magnificent in the room, but a careful observer will discover that all things there are so placed as to set one another off. Only a true *cha-jin* knows how to entertain his guests with a twig of camellia-tree with one bud half open and a few leaves in a small vase severely plain.

The next thing to admire is the tiny incense-holder which the guests find on a side shelf. When the contents are emptied into the hearth in honour of the guests, the leader will ask the host for the privilege of examining it. A small piece of silk called *fukusa* is always used for protection in placing the incense-holder on the *tatami*, or holding it in the hands in order to examine it. A few remarks about the *kaiseki* meal, served as soon as the guests are properly seated, may not be out of place. This meal, which forms an important part of the entertainment,

is prepared with the greatest care. There are not as many courses as in a conventional Japanese feast, and the guests are expected to leave no dish unfinished. One peculiarity of the *kaiseki* meal is the custom that everything is brought in by the host personally. The tea-room is accessible to none but the host while the entertainment is going on. The host comes in from time to time, but he does not dine with the guests in the same room.

When the meal is over, each guest puts in order all empty dishes and bowls on his tray, which the host will remove one by one to the adjoining room. When sweets are served, the first session closes, and, at the host's suggestion, the guests retire to the same waiting-room as before, or to another place where a bench is provided. Usually a gong which is an antique work of art is hung near the tea-room in order to give a signal for the guests to come back to the tea-room. Five or seven strokes are given usually. As soon as the first stroke is heard, the guests are expected to stop chatting or smoking and listen attentively in reverent attitude. It is the signal that the host is ready to serve the *koicha*, or thick tea. Care is taken not to make the strokes too strong or too weak. When struck by a practised hand, an ancient gong of rare quality produces rich and pleasing tones which make those who listen feel as if they were in a cloister or forest.

The same formality of purification is repeated, and the guests enter the tea-room in the same way as for the first session. On entering, led by the *shokyaku*, the guests find that the hanging scroll is gone. The flower arrangement, which has taken the place of the hanging scroll in the alcove, is the first thing to welcome the guests. This order is reversed when the entertainment is given late in the afternoon.

Mizusashi, or receptacle for fresh water, and *cha-ire*, or tea-caddy, are placed in the right place before the host enters with the tea-bowl held with both hands. The three following articles come with the tea-bowl—*cha-sen*, or tea-whisk; *cha-kin*, or tea-cloth; *cha-shaku*, or tea-spoon. The host retires to the adjoining room, to reappear immediately with *koboshi*, or receptacle for waste water; *hishaku*, or dipper; and *futaoiki*, or a small piece of bamboo or pottery for placing the cover of the kettle or the dipper. Of all these articles, the receptacles for fresh water and waste water may often be made plainly of wood. The bamboo dipper, whisk, and tea-cloth are strictly brand-new and scrupulously clean. But the caddy, bowl, and spoon, which the guests are privileged to examine closely after tea is served, are, as a rule, valuable objects of art. These three articles, as well as the incense-holder mentioned previously, are carefully selected by the host after a deep study of his



THE PLACE OF PURIFICATION: THE STONE BASIN, WITH RUNNING WATER, AT WHICH THE GUESTS WASH THEIR HANDS AND RINSE THEIR MOUTHS, WITH THE AID OF THE WOODEN DIPPER.

"The path from the waiting-place to the tea-room is the most important part of a Japanese landscape garden. The space available for the garden path may be very limited, but an expert designer knows how to arrange rocks, trees, stone lanterns, and water so skilfully that the charming combination of nature and art is conducive to a restful and contemplative frame of mind, which is necessary for enjoying the entertainment in the tea-room. This picture represents the stone basin, filled with water, which the guests will find near the tea-room on their way from the waiting-place. Under the leadership of the principal guest, a silent procession in single file starts from the waiting-place; and each guest is expected to purify himself at this point before entering the tea-room. A wooden dipper is provided for the guests to wash their hands and rinse their mouths."



A YOUNG HOSTESS IN THE TEA-ROOM: MAKING TEA BY THE SIDE OF THE SUNKEN FIRE-BOX.

"This picture represents a section of the tea-room and shows a young lady making tea for the guests, who are on the other side of the sunken fire-box, but not visible in this painting. With her left hand she holds the bowl, in which she has already poured a proper proportion of hot water over powdered tea. The young lady is shown beating the mixture by means of a bamboo whisk. Of the two kinds of powdered tea, this is the pasty style, which resembles thick spinach soup both in colour and consistency. Water is kept boiling in the iron kettle placed over the sunken fire-box. When tea is over, the principal guest will ask for the privilege of closely examining the bowl, caddy, and spoon."

treasures. There are quite a few preliminary steps before tea is served which are interesting to the observer, but space is too limited for a full description.

In an atmosphere conducive to restfulness and serenity, we listen to the soothings of pines, as the music of the boiling water is poetically called. The host is, of course, proud of the kettle and hearth. Any guest incapable of appreciating the artistic design of the antique kettle, or of discovering subtle charm in the wooden framework of the hearth, is not considered worthy of the invitation. The hearth is a deep square fire-box, and, that it may fit into the floor, a corner of the *tatami*, or mat, is cut. The stationary hearth is covered with a complete piece of *tatami* when a movable fire-brazier is used from the early summer till late in autumn.

When the pasty tea, resembling thick spinach soup in consistency, is made, as briefly described elsewhere, the host places it in front of the principal guest. He makes a bow to the fellow-guests and puts the bowl on the palm of his left hand. Supporting one side of the bowl with the right hand, he takes one sip, complimenting the host on the excellent flavour, right consistency, and so on. After taking two or more sips, the bowl is passed on to the second guest. It is passed from the second to the third guest and so on to the last guest. Those who are familiar with the ancient custom of handing round a loving-cup, which still prevails in England, will note an interesting analogy in the Japanese way of drinking pasty powdered tea from one common bowl.

The leader must not forget to request the host for the privilege of closely examining the tea-bowl. It is usually scrutinised and is turned

upside down for closer inspection. By no means should it be held high up lest it be dropped and so cause a fatal accident. When the bowl comes to the last guest, he takes it to the leader, who then returns it to the host. In a similar way, the caddy and spoon are examined by each guest. Would any outsider believe that a *cha-shaku*, which is a slender piece of plain-looking bamboo not longer than eight inches, is often sold for ten thousand yen or more? Yen 189,900 is, perhaps, the highest price ever paid for one tea-bowl—sold a couple of years ago at a public sale of the estate of an aristocratic family of ancient origin. When all these articles of great value are properly returned to the host in the prescribed fashion, *usu-cha*, or thin tea, is served in a less formal way either in the same room or another room. The bowl, caddy, spoon, etc., used are different from those used for the thick tea. This time tea is served individually, two bowls being used as a general rule. Each guest drinks the whole portion in his bowl and returns it to the host, who rinses it to make tea for another guest.

Four solid hours have elapsed since the guests assembled in the waiting-place, but they are not at all bored. The guests are not strangers, for the host has been careful in his selection, with a view to creating an atmosphere of warm congeniality. In addition to the indefinitely delicate and refreshing aroma of powdered tea, what one might call the tea-atmosphere permeating the waiting-place, garden path, and tea-room is conducive to a frame of mind that enables the guests and host to detach themselves for the time being from the sordid facts of the world. Topics of conversation are inexhaustible, for *cha-no-yu* is related to practically all branches of art.



THE SORCERER.

FROM THE PAINTING BY THE LATE A. FORESTIER.



"FLOATING ISLAND."

A FANTASY BY SIME.

FROM THE DRAWING BY S. H. SIME.

THE PIED PONY

(A Story from the Old French).

By H. F. M. PRESCOTT,

Author of "The Unhurrying Chase,"
"The Lost Fight," etc.

Illustrated by EDWARD OSMOND.

THERE was a youth, and a well-belovéd youth"—not the squire's son who loved the bailiff's daughter, but another one a long time before that. This good youth was a knight, and his lands lay in pleasant Lorraine among the deep woods of sycamore. He had a little castle in the midst of the woods, with a small clearing round it where his people grew two fields of barley to make him bread, and kept some brown cows to give him butter. But, though he was so poor, all Lorraine knew of young Sir William, because he spent every summer riding from one tourney to another, earning an honest living, poor soul, from the ransoms of the knights whom he rode down at the jousts.

It was a good enough life for him until the time came when there was a girl that he wanted to marry, and then the shoe began to pinch. The trouble was that her father was rich, infernally rich, and no fool neither. He knew the price of his daughter's marriage to the last copper, and he knew all about Sir William's little castle, and his two barley fields and six brown cows and two couple hunting dogs; and it is likely enough that he knew that Sir William slept on a straw mattress and under homespun frieze. He knew also about Sir William's pied pony, but he did not make much of that.

And yet the pied pony was beautiful; the story says that it was as beautiful as flowers, as the white-blossomed blackthorn; and that neither the King of France nor the Emperor of Rome himself had a horse so good. Sir William was proud of it, and whenever he rode to see his dear, for all it was a secret meeting, the pied pony had little bells of silver on its green harness, besides the green ribbons plaited into its white mane and tail.

The old knight who was the girl's father lived in the same forest, in a great castle on a green mound, with a strong oak stockade all round it; and there he kept his girl close. On one side of the hill ran a little river that broadened into pools, where in the summer there were water-lilies as yellow as butter. It was there that Sir William used to meet his dear; he would come riding through the woods on the pied pony by a narrow and secret path he had made for himself, and at the little river he would dismount and slip the bit from the pied pony's mouth, so that it might let down its velvet, wrinkling lips, gently snuffing and breathing, to the cool water, and drink so softly that it only troubled the surface with a few widening rings. Then it would turn away and graze about, only keeping a wise eye and a pricking ear for Sir William and his dear talking together at the stockade. They used to meet there in the evening mostly, when the purple-blue smoke went straight up into the air and everything was quiet, and the top of one tower, which was all they could see of the castle, turned first gold and then rose-colour in the sun. They would talk there at the stockade, and he would kiss her fingers through it, and that was all he ever could kiss, however much he longed to kiss her lips and hold her darling body in his arms.

As for her, she was a dear, sweet girl, so that it was no wonder that he loved her better than his own life; and she loved him again; that he knew, but how much he might guess and guess, for she would never tell him certainly. She would be merry, then sober, then tender for half a short minute, then merry again, and then suddenly she might give him a look or a broken word that made him feel he could dive



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fathoms deep and never come to the depth of her love; but immediately afterwards she would be teasing, or shamefast, or even cross.

One evening Sir William rode through the woods to see her. It had rained all day, and every leaf of all the trees was new-washed and hung with winking drops. Away to the east the low heavy clouds were purple-black like ripe damsons, and the frogs along the little river were croaking deliriously because of the delicious wet. Sir William let the pied pony drink, and then he leapt the brook, and she came to him, in a blue cloak as blue as her eyes, wind-blown between the orchard trees, with one hand holding the blue cloak across her breast. As he watched her come, Sir William felt something push his heart and heave it right over, and he knew he could not go on like this, only kissing her fingers through the oak stockade.

When he told her so, she was silent for a moment, and then she spoke like the wise, honest girl she was. "You must come, then, to my father, and ask for me for your wife."

He shook his head. "How can I?"

She put her fingers through the stockade and caught two of his and held them. "In my mind," she said—and she looked at him straight and true—"in my mind, the honour you have is as good as his riches. It's no uneven bargain." She stopped a minute, and then she said, "I should be proud," and, for all that she went as red as a rose, she kept her brave eyes on his as she said it.

So next day Sir William came openly to the gate of the castle, with a groom running beside, and all the bells on the pied pony's harness jingling like mad. But in less than half an hour he rode away again, very hot and angry-looking, for the old knight would not listen to him

for a moment, but had sent him off with a flea in his ear. The day after that, Sir William came to meet the girl at the stockade, and he told her all that had happened.

"Dear," was all she said, "then I know what you must do."

"What must I do?"
“Go to your uncle. He's every bit as rich as my father, and you will be his heir."

"That's not us at all. He'll live long enough yet. Rich uncles do."

"Listen. Ask him to go to my father and say this—Sir William, my nephew, has now three hundred pounds a year in lands and rents."

"But I haven't."

"Listen again! I have given my nephew three hundred pounds a year in lands and rents, and now I am asking for your daughter's hand for him. It would be a good marriage." That is what he must say."

"But—She held up one finger to stop him. "And you must give your uncle your word and oath to render him the land again the day we are married."

Sir William pulled his fingers through the stockade and kissed them, and then he struck the stockade with his fist, for it was very much in the way, and he swore at it, consigning it angrily to the devil. Then he said, "Goodbye, dearest dear!" and ran, and leapt the water, and got to horse. As he rode back through the forest the wet mould flew up behind the pied pony's hoofs, for Sir William was in a hurry, and he shouted and he sang, and thrashed the leaves with his riding-whip and felt the hanging raindrops shower down on him from the low branches.

He wasted no time at all, but went at once to his uncle and told him exactly what the girl had said. He told it all sitting in a room above the gate; the window was open because the day was warm, and, down below in the yard, a groom with a green cap and a red feather walked the pied pony to and fro to cool it; and up above, Sir William and his uncle dipped sops of cake into pale Rhine wine, as pale as winter sunshine and as clear. When Sir William's uncle had heard the tale, he said he would do all he was asked, and gladly too.

Next day, Sir William set off to a tourney in Champagne. He wanted fresh honour to offer to his dear, and more fame to make her father think better of him, and more ransoms to buy out of purple silk to wear on his wedding day, and a silver cup to stand on the board, and a velvet coverlet stitched with gold, and a large plum feather-bed. He reckoned that five knights' worth of ransoms would buy all this, and leave him with cash in hand. Within a month he was back again, very well pleased with himself, for he had won the honour of the tourney and the ransoms; and as he went about one knight would nudge another, and say: "That's Sir William!"

"What! That bandy-legged fellow with the squat?!"

"No, fool! The one with the fair hair and the broad shoulders."

So he bought his silver cup and the feather-bed and the other things, and then he settled down in his lodgings to wait for word from his uncle telling him when his marriage day should be. And all day long, while he waited, he had someone to sing to him, for as everyone knows, a young man in love cannot hear enough love-songs. So he sat there, with his eyes on the door, listening to the songs of Alais, and Dame Verna, and Aude, who had such love for Doon, and thinking of nothing but his dear. And then one day at noon, when the singing man had gone down to his dinner and the dogs lay flat in the shade, and there was no one about in the streets, the door opened, and there was the groom with the green cap and red feather. Sir William could not say a word.

"Sir," said the groom, "your uncle wants to borrow your pied pony to carry his young bride to church."

Sir William stared at him, and something began to freeze about his heart. "Who is his bride?" he asked, but he knew before ever the groom told him.

"So may I take the pony?" the groom said.

"Yes," said Sir William, and when the men had gone out he watched him leave, with the pied pony as beautiful as white-blossomed black-thorn, and shining in the sun like polished ebony or ivory. He was a little glad that he could serve her for the last time in this small way by giving her his horse to ride on, but the gladness was such a sad thing that next minute he had to hide his face in his hands. There was no one there to see him, so it did not matter. That same evening just before they shut the gates, he rode out of the town and took his way into the woods, home to his little castle.

The very next day, the old knight who was the father of Sir William's darling gave a great feast at his castle in the forest, for early on the morning after his girl was to be married. The whole house was full of

wedding guests, and every one of them old; and because old men have so many stories to tell, and stories are dry telling, they sat late and they drank much. It was midnight before they got up from table and went off to bed, each one as drunk as ten fiddlers. Last of all, the old knight went up to bed, but first he called Giles, the watchman, who had been drinking ale with the servants round the great bonfire in the yard till he could see five torches for one all round the hall.

"Giles," said the old knight, "as soon as ever the sun comes up, blow your horn to saddle and away. It's a long ride to the little chapel at the edge of the wood where the priest will marry my daughter, so we'll start early. Do you hear, Giles?"

Giles did hear, he did, and he was the man to watch that night, he was; sober as Good Friday, he was; and be sure he would blow his horn at the very first wink of dawn. So he went off to the tower to watch, and the old knight to his bed.

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and more ransoms to buy out of purple silk to wear on his wedding day, and a silver cup to stand on the board, and a velvet coverlet stitched with gold, and a large plum feather-bed. Yet it was growing lighter. There were shadows in the orchard, and the sky above the tree-tops was grey, though it was deep still with the night. Then, as she looked, she saw a thin slip of shining silver slide up out of the trees, and widen and rise and brighten as the moon climbed. It was the moon, and not the dawn, thank God!

But Giles, the watchman on the tower, had had to pinch himself to keep himself awake, so that the night seemed very long, and his head was spinning with all the ale he had drunk. He started into the darkness till his eyes were full of pricks of light, but still the dawn would not come. Then, after a long time, he heard him stand at the roof of the cowhouse below, and a cat was walking on it a black-and-white cat. The cat passed along the ridge of the roof as daintily as a queen, and then sat down and looked all round about, and Giles looked at the cat.

Not only could he see the cat, but he could see that it was a black-and-white cat; but all cats are grey in the dark. Therefore it was not dark, and if it was not dark it was light; and if it was light it was the dawn. He put his horn to his mouth in a great hurry and blew his hardest

dew and wet mould and rotted wood, and thought of rheumatism and their warm beds. But most of them were like the old knight who had charge of the bride, and rode nod-nodding in their saddles, jolting like half-fallen sacks with the movement of their horses, but fast asleep for all that.

The forest track was narrow, and then rode slower and slower, and now and again one of them stopped to pull away a bramble that had caught his leg, and he blocked the way for the others, and they woke up to curse him, and went to sleep sooner than ever, while the horses stood still. So here was a crowd of men, jostling in the narrow path, and there was one rider alone, or two, and no one else in sight; and that was how it was with the bride and the old knight beside her. They rode all alone, he asleep in his saddle and muttering now and then, and she wiping away tears that only made room for fresh tears. She wanted to stop crying, because she knew that her eyes must really be a sight by now; but then Sir William would not be there to see her, so why should she care how she looked, since he was all the world to her; and she began crying again. But all the same, she did care a little.

The path went down into a deep valley where there was no light at all, for by now the moon was sinking. And there, in the darkest part of the woods, the pied pony slackened its pace, and stopped, and jerked its head aside and turned right out of the way into a narrower track still, that smelt of sweet wild mint as the hoofs crushed it in the dark. In a minute the girl knew that she was quite alone, and in five she had lost all sound of the riders going along the forest track to the old chapel. But she did not cry out or try to turn the pied pony back, because she loved Sir William so much that she would rather anything happened to her, even to be lost in the woods and eaten by bears, than to be married to that old man. Besides, she knew that her eyes really must be a sight by now.

So she let the pied pony carry her on, and soon she quite forgot to cry, because she was so frightened of the loneliness and the soft, small noises of the wood, and the shadows that sometimes moved and slid towards her and then drew back. But still, she did not scream or cry out, because she was a brave girl, and because she loved Sir William so much. Suddenly, when the moon was still near to setting, she heard a horn blown in front of her, sounding for the morning. It was two hours yet till sunrise, but the watchman who blew the horn (his name was Matthew) was a man of a restless and eager disposition who hated monotony.

Not long after she heard the horn blow, the pied pony went splash, splash through a ford, and came out at last from the forest into a little clearing where six brown cows were just beginning to have their first thoughts about breakfast, and where, close by, there were two narrow fields of barley, and in the midst a small castle. The pied pony went right on till it came to the stone bridge that crossed the moat; its hoofs made a great clattering as it crossed, because the world was so quiet yet; then it stood still and switched its long white tail and whinnied, remembering the bin of oats in the right-hand corner of the stable.

Up above the gate, Matthew, the watchman who had blown his horn, peered down through one of the holes made for boiling oil and arrows and such things, and saw below him the pied pony, whisking its tail; so he went down to the gate and opened the little grating and looked out. The poor girl heard him there, and she was almost crying again because here was shelter, and she had been so frightened in the woods. She held out her hands to him and begged him to let her in, only let her in, and she would go on again when it was light. Matthew stared at her through the grating, and saw her gown of scarlet silk and her veil as soft as a cloud and glittering silver in the low moonlight; and there were rings on her fingers and jewels in her mantle-clasp.

"Holy Virgin!" he said to himself. "It's a fairy!" And: "Wait a minute!" he said to her, and clapped the grille to and bolted to let her master. Sir William was lying on his bed, but he had not slept that night, for he was waiting for the morning that was to be the wedding morning of his dear. When Matthew the watchman burst in, Sir William said: "Go to the devil! What do you want here?"

But Matthew pulled off the grille and threw it on the floor, and began to dance on it because he was so excited, and he shouted: "Master, Master; here's a fairy woman God has sent you instead of the wench you've lost!" She was sitting outside the gate on your own pied pony, a young thing and as pretty as a flower, in a scarlet gown and jewels on every finger. And she keeps on crying: "Let me in! Let me in!"

Up jumped Sir William out of bed, and he grabbed the fine purple surcoat he had thrown down on the floor last night, the surcoat he had bought for his wedding day. In less than a minute he was at the gate, and he did not need to look through the grating for he heard the voice of his darling crying: "Let me in! Let me in!" So he opened the gate and brought her in, and lifted her down from the pied pony, and then and there he took her in his arms and kissed her a hundred times, while the good Matthew turned his back and led away the pied pony to its stable.



Next day, Sir William set off to a tourney in Champagne. He wanted fresh

awake. She had cried so much that she thought she had no more tears, and her eyes were so hot and heavy, and her head ached so that she got out of bed to cool it at the window. Down below was the orchard, but all the trees were hidden in the darkness; only she knew that they were there, and beyond them the little river and the place where she and Sir William had talked to each other through the stockade. Less than a month ago he had been there with her, and the water-lilies were not all withered yet; they were there in the darkness, shining, yet making no light. But Sir William was far away, and she was to be married tomorrow to his uncle, the old man.

A little sighing wind went through the leaves of the orchard, and when she looked up again she could see the dim shapes of the waiting trees, as though the wind were blowing the dark away. "God help me!" she thought. "It is the dawn." And she looked up to see whether there was any brightening in the sky, and if the stars were huge and bright and trembling as they are just before the dawn; but they were small points twinkling at her, cold and cheerful and quiet.

For saddle-up and away. The poor girl at her window heard it and gave a great sob; and the whole castle heard it and stirred and woke. Sleepy men take no long time to dress, and soon they were every one in the courtyard, greybeards and baldheads, all very heavy and confused.

"Sorrow!" said one, "What a dark morning!"

"I'm not awake," said another. "Plague take all wines and wines!"

When all were ready they rode out by two into the forest, and some went before and some came after the bride, and she rode beside a good old knight, a friend of her father's. They did not talk to each other, for she was crying under her veil, and she had begun to cry again when she saw the pied pony and they lifted her up to it and he nodded in his saddle before they were a stone's-throw from the gate. Soon they came to the deep woods, where there was silence except for the stir they made, and only a dim twilight, for the great sycamores were between them and the moon sailing high up in the empty sky. The old men, as many as were awake, snuffed the good, damp smell of

Then Sir William took her by the hand and led her up to the best bedroom, where the great plump feather-bed had been laid, spread over with the velvet coverlet stitched with gold. He and his dear sat down on the edge of the bed, her hand in his, and with their other hands they crossed themselves and crossed themselves, lest it should all be a dream. By this time everyone was awake in the castle, and the servants were bringing in cake and wine, and sweet flowers and rushes for her feet. But whenever there was no one looking, he and she kissed and held each other close. You may guess how pleasant that was, now that there was no oak stockade between them, for he found her lips as soft and sweet as he had always known they would be, and she found that his burnt her like fire, and hurt and pursued and captured her most exquisitely; and for each the kisses of the other were more potent than the richest wine that is made from any grapes under the sun.



He put his horn to his mouth and blew his hardest for saddle-up and away. The poor girl at her window heard it and gave a great sob.

him with the whites of many eggs and good wheat flour; it was his share of the wedding-feast; a share not undeserved. [THE END.]

The time passed away very quickly in this occupation, and when the morning came Sir William's priest married them safe and sure. When this was done, Sir William sent off Matthew to the little chapel at the edge of the forest, and he found the wedding party scouring the woods for the bride they had mislaid. So he gathered them together and bade them all to Sir William's wedding-feast, and they came, every man of them; for, after all, they had set out that morning to be wedding-guests, and wedding-guests they would be.

They all came, even his uncle and her father, because they thought they had best put a cheerful face on it; and there in Sir William's castle they feasted and drank to the bride, and told each other behind their hands that it was what they had intended all along. Meanwhile, in his stable, the pied pony munched fine bread made specially for



EDWARD OSMOND
1931.

Matthew stared at her through the grating, and saw her gown of scarlet silk and her veil; and there were rings on her fingers and jewels in her mantle-clasp. "Holy Virgin!" he said to himself. "It's a fairy!"



FOUR-LEAFED CLOVER.

By CARLOS DE BATLLE.

Illustrated by C. S. DE TEJADA.

THE church bells of Peñacerrada sounded the Angelus. As if it were a signal, Patrice and Raymond de Faïdo, master wheelwrights, put aside their tools and, coming to the threshold, looked out over the town square. Patrice was tall and bronzed, with the figure of an athlete. A gentle shyness lit up his bony features, from which dark eyes shone beneath thick eyebrows, and when his thin red lips parted in a smile they disclosed two rows of strong white teeth. Raymond, slight and thin, was quite unlike his brother. His grey, dreamy eyes often held a steely glance, and his oval face was surrounded by a halo of matted fair hair.

The two brothers watched with amusement the life of the little town square. The belfry was pink in the setting sun, and beneath it a gypsy brandished the shears as he clipped a donkey. A crowd of children were romping, playing marbles or leap-frog. In the middle of the square a score of young people were making a jumbled heap of old tumble-down furniture as a bonfire for the feast of St. John. For everyone knows that, from time immemorial, the feast of St. John has been rigorously observed at Peñacerrada. The day was the 23rd of June. In the morning the parish church council, led by the vicar, the curate, the sexton, and the two choir-boys, had borne an image of St. Elizabeth, mother of St. John the Baptist, to the hermitage outside the walls—to be brought back to-morrow with great pomp to the altar devoted to the worship of her son. And at the feet of the image the holy relic of that district, a bone of St. Lucia, had been laid in its filigree reliquary.

The young people finished preparing their bonfire, and, beckoning to the two brothers, went off towards the church. Raymond reminded his brother that before night they were to play the traditional game of ninepins; but Patrice's attention was fixed on a line of young girls crossing the square. They walked with a sturdy grace, carrying pitchers on their shoulders, and happiness danced in their eyes. It was not till the last of them had disappeared that the two brothers strolled off to the place where the game was to be played. The ninepins were set behind the apse of the church. In front of the line of young men and girls the alcaid and an old man with the profile of a Roman emperor drew lots for the order of play, and then settled themselves to discuss the shots and count the points. The gypsy donkey-clipper finished his work, slipped his great shears into his waistband, and took his place at their side.

According to ancient custom, the winner of the game had the right to choose a meadow in which, next morning, between dawn and sunrise, he might go and search for a four-leaved clover. And at Peñacerrada and thereabouts everybody knows that he who finds one within the given time need only tear off the leaves to have four wishes fulfilled. Patrice was to play last. When his turn came, he put himself in position, left foot on the furrow, knee slightly bent, his body leaning forward. He swung his arm three times like a pendulum, turned it in a full circle, and the bowl sped from his hand. The shot was greeted with cries of astonishment and delight, for all nine skittles had fallen.

The gypsy waved his arms like a windmill. "By the bone of St. Lucia!" he cried, "before twenty-four hours are up this lad will have had an extraordinary adventure."

And the old man with the profile of a Roman emperor put his trembling hand on Patrice's shoulder and said: "What you have just done is indeed of good omen. You heard what the gypsy said. These wanderers often learn from their wives the art of reading in the stars and soothsaying. Now, I advise you to spend the night watching over the meadow of your choice. All my life long—and my gratitude to God and the Holy Virgin is great that it has been so long—I have heard tell that Fortune spends St. John's night in picking four-leaved clovers. And it is doubtless for that reason that, though they are sometimes found at this time of year, never, in the memory of man, has one been found on the morning that follows this night."

Patrice laughed loudly. "If Fortune desires to pick four-leaved clovers to-night," he said, "I have no power to stop her. Is it not said that it is she who makes them grow? In that case she knows where to find them. But, all the same, I will go with Raymond to-morrow morning to see if she hasn't forgotten one or two."

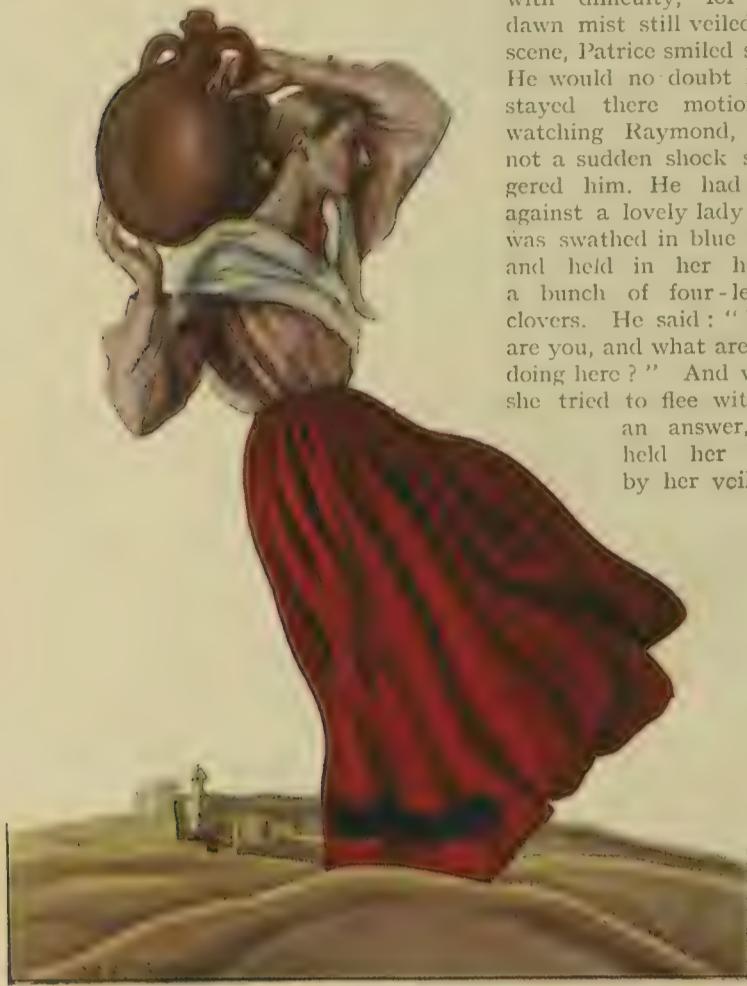
There were groups on the square now, discussing Patrice's lucky shot, the gypsy's prophecy, and the advice which the old man had given. Soon after, as Patrice was going home to dinner, he heard his name called. It was Isabelle coming from the fountain, Isabelle, the jewel of Peñacerrada, whom all the young girls took as their model, whom each of the young men would have liked to take as his wife. "Patrice," she said, in a voice that trembled a little; "my grandfather is ill, and I shall not come to dance on the square to-night. I know all that has happened. If you find the four-leaved clover to-morrow, I shall probably never see you again. So, in any case, I say good-bye to you now." Patrice tried to hold the girl back, but she ran from him, blushing red as a wild poppy. "When friends part for a long time," he cried, as he pursued her laughing, "they kiss." But before Patrice could catch her up Isabelle had reached her home and shut the door.

During the family meal Raymond sat between his mother and brother and made a thousand plans for the future. He was sure that next day they would find the longed-for four-leaved clover. Patrice laughed, often interrupting his brother to goad him on, and their mother, seeing her eldest son laughing and joking, laughed and joked too. When grace had been said, Raymond went off to join his friends, but Patrice stayed to help his mother take off the table-cloth; he remained with her while she washed up and put the dishes on the shelves, and did not go out till she had gone up to bed.

In the middle of the square, the bonfire was burning in honour of St. John. To the nasal sounds of an accordion the girls were dancing a round, while the young men, trying to attract their attention, were leaping across the flames. Patrice sought Isabelle in vain, and, though his steps led him several times to the girl's house, in the end he had to go away without seeing her.

Before dawn Patrice and Raymond walked together to the meadow that Patrice had chosen. Raymond, still confident in their good fortune, was as talkative as ever. His hopes and his ambitions knew no bounds; his desires grew ever wilder and more extravagant. Patrice listened to him with a smile, and when they reached the meadow had difficulty in holding him back, to await the appointed time. The night was paling

now ; the poplars raised their thin trunks to the sky. As soon as the first lights of dawn appeared on the surrounding hills, Raymond dashed forward in a kind of frenzy and began searching in the grass. Following his brother's movements with difficulty, for the dawn mist still veiled the scene, Patrice smiled still. He would no doubt have stayed there motionless watching Raymond, had not a sudden shock staggered him. He had run against a lovely lady who was swathed in blue veils and held in her hands a bunch of four-leafed clovers. He said : " Who are you, and what are you doing here ? " And when she tried to flee without an answer, he held her back by her veils.



Isabelle.

" Let me go," she said then, holding out the bunch towards him. " Take the clover that you are seeking, but let me go."

" I am seeking two," replied Patrice. " I have come with my brother."

The woman gave Patrice two clovers, and then, while he gaped in surprise, she vanished as if on the wings of the wind. Now the first rays of the sun streaked the pale-blue sky with gold. At the top of his voice Patrice shouted to Raymond. He was approaching already, his face furrowed in disappointment ; but when he saw the clovers which his brother held out triumphantly he stopped short in amazement. Taking the one Patrice offered, Raymond cried : " One for each of us ! . . . What shall we do now ? "

Patrice looked at him in surprise. " What shall we do now ? " he repeated.

" Yes," said Raymond. " Surely, now that Fortune has smiled on us, we don't go back to lead a miserable existence making trucks, barrows, and wheels."

" Then what ? " asked Patrice.

" Then," replied Raymond, and his firm, decided tone quite nonplussed his brother, " then, either alone or with you, I go."

" Go ? . . . Where to ? " stammered Patrice.

" Where my steps lead me. The four leaves of this clover are only waiting for me to tear them off before they grant my wishes. I am twenty-four years old, all of life is before me. I want to live, to be happy, and to astonish the whole world with my achievements."

" And our mother ? " murmured Patrice. " What of her ? "

" We will make her come and join us wherever we settle down."

After a long silence, Patrice said very gently : " Go, then, Raymond, if that is your resolve ; and may God and Holy Mary of Vitoria go with you ! Enjoy life, win triumphs, fulfil your dreams ! But remember that if, in spite of all, you feel the need one day of grasping a friendly hand and of resting your head against a loyal breast, that will be your welcome at Peñacerrada." Without waiting longer, Raymond turned half round, pressed the clover against his heart, and stepped out straight before him. He did not turn round, and so he never saw his brother stretching out his arms after him.

As though trying to escape from himself, Raymond walked on and on, straight before him. To avoid passing an old kinsman from Payueta, who sat by the side of the road watching his few sheep and warming himself in the morning sun, he made a wide détour. And in order not to



Raymond walked on and on. . . .

meet people whom he knew, he walked around the villages of Berganzo, Ocio, and Zambrana. At Mirande he crossed the Ebro. On the pearly surface of the water as it flowed slow and melancholy between the reed-beds of the banks a ship was sailing, reminding him of the long winter evenings when, sitting round the fireside after dinner, his brother Patrice read aloud travel stories bought from a pedlar. Through his excited brain passed in strange confusion the marvellous wanderings of the Jew, Benjamin of Tudèle, the wonderful adventures of Hernan Cortés in Mexico, the amazement and delight of those who came first to California, and the tribulations of Rodriguez Cabrillo, when, skirting the Pacific coast,

he came at last to the Golden Gate. Surely he, Raymond de Faido, would be added to the list of these heroes of adventure. Already he saw himself in command of a fleet of galleons returning, gold-laden, to Spain from these far-off dream-lands.

Drawing strength from these fancies, Raymond walked on and on, straight before him. He spared no glance on the wild, magnificent ravine of Pancorbo ; without resting he scaled the Obarene Hills, and climbing their yellow rocks he left behind him Santa María of Rivarredonda. The sun was near to setting when Raymond reached the rich upland of Bureba, merry with its sparkling stream. Hungry, thirsty, and overcome with fatigue—for he had walked nearly twenty leagues—he sat down to rest beneath an oak. A fragrant breeze from the mountain peaks caressed his face, and Raymond thought how pleasant it would be to live there, in a house where nothing was lacking.



To avoid passing an old kinsman from Payueta, Raymond made a wide détour.

[Continued on page 46.]



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She turned to the old man at her right hand. "I am sure, Monsieur de Trévarroc, the soldiers of the other Emperor would never have been so effeminate" . . . He twisted his fierce white moustache, and looked down at his small hostess with friendly amusement.

THE CAPTAIN'S COLD.

By AGNES MURE MACKENZIE,

Author of "Cypress in Moonlight," "Keith of Kinnellan," etc.



MAJOR D'HARMENTIER put down his glass, and sneezed so violently that it nearly went over. A still more magnificent explosion followed: he blew his nose and looked plaintively at his wife, who shook her head and regarded him with a malicious seriousness. She had been married for seven weeks, and adored him. "A cold in the head, mon ami, and you a soldier! What a disgrace to the Emperor's uniform!"

Her lord blew his nose again, and protested. "My dear, it means one of old Honorine's tisanes. And I assure you, they are a better test of courage than an enemy battery that has got the range."

But Madame—whom he could almost have put in his pocket—delighted to tease her big Norman. She turned to the old man at her right hand. "I am sure, Monsieur de Trévarroc, the soldiers of the other Emperor would never have been so effeminate." He had been watching the passage-at-arms with a smile, but at the mention of his Emperor his straight old body came a little more upright. He twisted his fierce white moustache, and looked down at his small hostess with friendly amusement.

"I assure you, Madame, that even Napoleon's armies were mortal men."

"Not with colds in the head, Chevalier!"

"Yes, with colds in the head. I am desolated to contradict a lady, but—"

"No, no. I am sure you would never have made such a gaffe—you, a hussar!"

"Hélas, Madame! I regret . . . But I had, and even very usefully, once."

"Useful?" His host groaned, and blew his nose again. "If this curse of mankind has ever any use, except to degrade a man in the eyes of his wife, let me know it for heaven's sake, and I will resign myself to knowing I can't say '*Presentez armes*' for a week with any sort of military decency." He stroked his fair pointed beard, laughing: but the old man's eyes had grown more serious, and he did not answer at once.

Madame's black curls swayed daintily on her shoulders as she leant to him out of a foam of organdi. "A story, Chevalier! But you will tell us, yes? Je le veux!" Few men—and certainly not a hussar of the Emperor—could have stood out against the smile and the curls and still cherished any sense of being *galant homme*. But M. de Trévarroc looked down at his glass, and twirled the stem of it.

Madame repeated, "Je le veux!" and her little slipper tapped on the parquet. "Adrien, make him tell."

Illustrated by GORDON NICOLL.

Her husband cocked an eyebrow at her, between the candles. "You are better equipped for that, I think, ma mie."

"De grâce, Chevalier—" and when Madame cooed that, most masculine resistance came to an end. The old soldier looked up, in fact, but his smile was troubled.

"If you wish it so much, Madame . . . But indeed, I hardly know how to tell you of it. To begin with—" he looked to his host for help—"it is—it would nowadays be thought a little—indiscreet."

Madame made a face. "My dear Chevalier, we are not now under his Majesty Louis Philippe." Monsieur d'Harmentier frowned slightly: he sometimes wished they were. The Chevalier still twisted his glass.

"Besides that, Madame, I am not quite sure—I never have been sure—of what, precisely, is the actual story."

"Ah then, you cannot know it was indiscreet!"

He looked up with a gesture of capitulation. "If it must be, Madame—" He fingered his white moustache: the end of the pallid scar of a sabre-cut showed above his wrist-band as his sleeve moved back. Adrien d'Harmentier filled up the glasses: he also wanted that story, for the Chevalier's were worth hearing as a rule, even three or four times, and this was certainly one he did not know.

"It was—very long before you were born, Madame. Forty-five years ago, to be precise. That is, in the Spanish campaign of 1809. I was twenty-two, and had got my captaincy after Saragossa, at the end of four years' service—an odd service, possibly, for a Trévarroc, but I lost my parents in '94, as you know, and most other things but the silver medal of my patron St. Barde my mother gave me when they took her away. She was pretty, my little mother, and not so much older than you are, Madame. And to serve France, when I grew into my teens, was to serve the Emperor. Eh well, my first campaign was Austerlitz. He was great, that little grey man, and he made France great.

"But that cursed Spanish campaign was another matter. However, my story is only of one night, or of one and another. I was young, as I say, and a hussar of Junot's . . . and I need not tell you that my private opinion of M. le capitaine Barde-Amaury-Maurice de Trévarroc was considerable. It's a uniform that sets a good pair of shoulders, and I had them then, and a seat on a horse and an eye for a pretty woman . . . a moustache in those days was the privilege of the cavalry. You would not have seen a little bourgeois twirl his from a boulevard café then, I assure you!"

"Well then, it was a little while after the taking of Saragossa. I owed my step, in fact, to those twenty-three days of fighting in the

streets, which lifted our senior captain to a colonelcy. Not a job for cavalry at all, Saragossa, but Soult was glad enough to use what came to hand, and, after all, we would have fought under water if the Emperor had said 'Allez-y, mes enfants!'

"It was a little after the end of that business. I suppose it would be the latter part of March, and I had my troop detached on patrol duty in the upper valley of the Jalon, on the marches where Aragon meets the two Castiles. It's grim country, and those March nights were bitter: splintered stone hills, and bright stars, and a wind like death. And if a man fell out, or went down in a skirmish, we were apt to have him, or parts of him, thrown into the camp a few nights later. And it was made reasonably plain to the onlooker that his demise had been neither speedy nor pleasant.

"That sort of thing is not good for young troops. My lads would have charged Satan's own artillery, and very probably sabred the gunners. But after they found my junior subaltern—well, I won't tell you what had been done to him. But I had to dismount myself and be sick by the road, and I'd seen a few assorted corpses by that time.

"We'd had some weeks of that kind of thing, short of rations, short of sleep, short of blankets, our horses beginning to show signs of wear,

and hardly a shot could we get at the Spanish guerillas, when we were relieved and told to return to Saragossa. We gave the relief our blessing—they were Chasseurs—told them what we thought would keep up their spirits, and set off down the valley. It was not a pleasant march, and in the evening my horse came down in a ford. I spent the night in a soaked uniform—I dared not strip to dry it at a fire, as if Messieurs les guerilleros raided us, and I happened to be caught, I felt I had rather begin affairs, at least, in my boots and dolman, for the sake of morale. At that altitude, the night, you conceive, was not amusing, and next day I did not feel the better for it.

"We went on down that dismal valley, and at nightfall we came to a bridge across the Jalon itself, called Pontevedra de los Caballeros. There was a house by the far bridge-head, something between a farm and a shabby little *manoir*. It was blowing dry from the rock and snow of the Sierras, and the wind rising, and what was left of my troop's pelisses and blankets was inconsiderable, so I was very glad to see a decent prospect of shelter.

"We found the place garrisoned by two old ladies, one paralysed, with a handful of elderly servants, mostly women. Food, of course, was more than we could hope for, but we unearthed some forage for our poor beasts. We put them in the court with a guard, and the lower storey billeted my men. The place was like a small fortress, and when I'd looked well round it and posted my sentries, I felt I could promise myself a night in bed.

"One thing we had, and that was fuel. I can tell you, I enjoyed that fire. The old lady—she was civil enough, poor soul—offered me a big stark room on the upper floor, with heavy shutters closed against the north wind, a great bed, a fine brushwood fire, and not much else but a dilapidated chair or two, a table with my haversack, and bare walls that had once been tapestried. To a cavalryman in the Spain of 1809, it was St. Cloud and the Tuilleries rolled into one. She left me to it, with a very stately curtsey, and I made my *politesse* with some sincerity; for, although my lads were a decent lot enough, you may imagine they did not care for Spaniards, and I was sorry for her, though I had given strict orders about damage. The place stank of dry rot, but it was blessedly warm, and I was shivering. Marrail, my lieutenant, had the one next to it. We had a meal of a sort, and some harsh thin wine, tasting of tar. He left me to go the round then, and I sat between the fire and a tallow candle—I have never smelt one since but I see the place, with little blue drifts of wood-smoke oozing out of the corners of the chimney-piece, and a pale mark over it where one of those big carved Spanish crucifixes had evidently hung till quite recently.

"Yes, I remember all that clearly enough. One could have drunk a hogshead of that *piquette* without being deranged by it—or warmer, either. I remember I was wishing for a good bowl of the *soupe aux choux* my Breton nurse used to make, for I was shivering and feverish and my head ached, and I felt very little like what I hoped I still looked like in the saddle. I was in that



"I spent the night in a soaked uniform—I dared not strip to dry it at a fire."

stupid state of sleepy malaise when one wants very much to be in bed—I hadn't so much as seen a mattress for weeks—but can't muster the energy to get there. I remember looking stupidly at my boots, and wondering if there were a jack or if I would have to shout for a servant. And I know that what made me look up was a change of the light on my silver-plated spurs.

"I told you there were two women about the place. I did not tell you that both the one who was paralysed and the one who was not were squat creatures, heavy with fat, and as ugly as frogs. But the woman who looked at me from the other side of the hearth was so lovely that I, a captain of the Fifteenth Hussars, gaped at her while you could have counted three at least before I had wits to get to my feet and bow. She had a transparent pallor like a white flower, great flaming dark eyes, and dark hair: that and her beauty was the first I saw. She held out her hand to me and smiled in a fashion that excused me, I think, for kissing it with more deliberation than mere civility would have demanded. I remember I wished my uniform was less ragged; but it was the Emperor's uniform after all, and a fine figure of a man inside it—I was that in those days, and at twenty-two one takes pleasure in such knowledge. It may have been this that made me notice her gown. In those days women did not wear a half-dozen petticoats spread out on whalebone like the dome of the Invalides. The fair ones were content with a layer of muslin, and sometimes wet muslin at that, caught under the breast. But the Señora's grey silk was like the dress of to-day: her tight bodice rose out of a huge rustling spread of skirt. There was a difference about the shoulders, somehow. I do not know what it was, though I remember her very clearly, standing there, and the great pile of black soft hair, and her brilliant eyes.

"Well, the lady was not unfriendly. She spoke very good French, too. I set a chair for her, and we sat by the fire and chatted—I said what you might expect a young officer of hussars, not ill-looking, and intelligent as lads go, to say to a woman who was both lovely and witty. And it did not seem to displease her in the least. Most of the Spanish I knew was curses, of course. I tried the rest on her, and she laughed at me, but not unkindly: it's a very taking language to make love in. She had a way of using those brilliant eyes that went to my head, and what began as *galanteries* across the table had got so far as to give me possession of the very beautiful arm that disappeared modestly at the elbow into a froth of lace. There was a mole on the inner side of it, and I leant over the table and did what you might expect in the circumstances—or attempted it, for before my lips could touch she had slipped from my hand like water, and got to her feet. She did not run, but the sudden movement brought down the whole mass of her hair as she looked at me. I have never seen hair like it: it covered her like a cloak, and it hung to her knees, and it was so black that even in the shadow away from the fire both it and the smoke-grey silk of her strange dress had a sort of glimmer on them, as if they gave out a very faint light of their own.

"I did not spring after her, but sat back in my chair, as I wanted her to know she had nothing to fear. She was not afraid, however, but



"We came to a bridge across the Jalon itself, called Pontevedra de los Caballeros. There was a house by the far bridge-head, something between a farm and a shabby little manoir."

her little white pointed teeth showed as she smiled. She leant towards me till the luminous black of her hair brushed over my wrist . . . well, what would you have? She was on my knee a little after that, and apparently not displeased, shaking her hair over me: it had a curious disturbing scent, not like orris-root, but of spices, like incense, only not incense. I filled my hands with it, and told her in French and Spanish how lovely she was. I had forgotten, by now, I was feeling ill.

"By and by she said, '*Hermoso de mi alma*, will you braid my hair?' I put up my hands as she leant forward to me, and began. The stuff had a life of its own in my fingers; the great braid of it was nearly as thick as my wrist, and my hands were jarring and tingling in the palms. She leant forward, and it slipped over her shoulder, with a cold touch on my face. Her little white pointed teeth showed for a second, and then—the cold in the head that I had been breeding caught me at last with a magnificent sneeze. There were three of them, that nearly blew my head off. It was not a dignified moment, for I had essayed a certain audacity, and a sneeze in the circumstances, let alone three . . . I grabbed in the breast of my dolman for my rag of a handkerchief, and brought out with it the medal of St. Barde my mother gave me before she was guillotined.

"I simply do not know what it was that happened. Have you ever been caught by the wind of a shell bursting? I remember something like that, with a queer sense of bright green light and piercing sound, but no more than a second of either. The next thing I recall, and that quite clearly, was Marail standing over me trying to get the sour wine

between my teeth. No sign of the Señora. He had not seen her. I had knocked my chair over in falling, and I must have lain unconscious for some little time, though Marail swore he heard me fall from halfway upstairs, for there was a trace on the floor that showed a great coal had fallen out of the fire, and had time to burn quite away—a long, burnt mark, with the little silver medal lying on an unburnt spot in the middle of it.

"No, I do not know precisely what happened. It is possible that she, or someone else, tried to stun me or knock out my brains. That is

the curve, that the shutters hung charred on the walls, the roof was broken, and there were black smears on the whitewash—a kind I was familiar with by then.

"There?" I said, and the skin pricked between my shoulders.
"In the fire?"

"No, mon capitaine. I burnt the place, and hanged the men—old fellows, I did not like doing it. But they must be taught not to murder French officers."

"He was murdered there, then—le capitaine Rivarol?"



"The sudden movement brought down the whole mass of her hair as she looked at me."

quite possible. Or I may have fainted, and she gone for help. That also is possible.

"It was some weeks after that, at all events, that we rode up the Jalon valley again, to Pontevedra de los Caballeros. I found that the patrol I had to relieve was the same troop of Chasseurs who had taken over from us in the upper valley. But it was the lieutenant who handed over. He reported the loss of his captain.

"Guerilleros, I suppose," I said.

"Not this time, mon capitaine." And he waved a hand at the *manoir* above the bridge, and I saw, what I had not noticed as we came round

"Yes, mon capitaine. I found him strangled in bed, grinning. They swore on the crucifix they had not done it. But I had the place well picketed, and no one could have got in from the outside. I could not get any details out of them, though, and it was a sufficiently queer mark—on his throat, I mean. Like a thick plait of something. I have never seen a rope braided like that."

"Well, that was all. I took over from Lieutenant Sandrière. I did not bivouac my men in the ruin. After all, it was May, and the walls after the fire were possibly not safe. I believe they grumbled."

[THE END.]



"The Christmas Gift"

DEWAR'S

"White Label"

WHISKY

Four-Leaved Clover.—(Continued from Page 38.)

While a young herdsman made sad music on a reed pipe, a burst of hunting-horns roused Raymond, trembling.

Unconsciously he drew out his four-leaved clover and tore off a leaf. He saw before him a path which he had not noticed before : a force stronger than his will urged him to rise and walk along it. At the end of the path there stood before his astonished gaze a splendid mansion, the two round towers at its sides roofed with sparkling tiles. Raymond went in through the half-open park gate, crossed the threshold, and saw in the vaulted hall a coffer inlaid with ivory and silver, its seven drawers lying open. In the middle and largest drawer he found a roll of papers—title-deeds to the property in his name. In a kind of dream Raymond explored his abode. Every luxury was there—soft beds in the bed-rooms, dinner laid in the great dining-hall. He appeased his hunger, went to bed, and fell into a deep sleep. When he woke up he had to make an effort to recall the events of the previous day. Then he dressed in the rich clothes which filled several of the chests, and went out to visit his estate. There was room in the stables for twenty-five horses; in the kennels for more than a hundred hounds; and for five hundred sheep in the fold.

Raymond lost all notion of time. One morning he was listening drowsily to the sad music of a reed pipe played by a young herdsman among his goats, when suddenly a far-off burst of hunting-horns roused him, trembling. From the edge of the wood he saw pass before him a magnificent cavalcade, and among the ladies, one, fair as a honeycomb, with eyes of cornflower blue, who plunged him into mingled delight and discontent. Long after she had disappeared Raymond thought he saw

her still. The memory of her pursued and haunted him. He decided that he must have her for himself, in his fine mansion. After a night spent in dreaming of her, Raymond at last tore from its frail stem the second leaf of his clover.

At once the sound of hunting-horns filled the valley anew. Raymond dashed out, and, guided by the approaching noise, went to meet the cavalcade. He crossed a little path which ended in a deep ravine hidden by shrubs, and with terror saw the woman of his dreams galloping down this path. He rushed forward and stopped the horse; and when the young rider realised the peril from which this stranger had saved her she alighted from her horse to thank him. The other hunters came up and surrounded Raymond, and one of them, the fair lady's father, promised that he and his daughter would come and visit him the next day. Wild with impatience, Raymond thought only of astonishing his guests. The stables, the kennels, the sheepfold must be filled . . . and the third clover-leaf was torn off.

People from round about hurried up to seek service at the mansion, and he made his choice from among them. But, as he was about to give them their advance pay, Raymond remembered that, though he had horses, sheep, and hounds, a fine mansion in a fine estate, plate and tapestries, pictures and beautiful clothes, yet he was entirely without ready cash. While his servants waited, Raymond shut himself up in one of the high halls and pondered at length. It occurred to him that if the great chests which adorned the room were filled with gold doubloons, he would have enough to satisfy all his desires for the rest of his life. Then he made that wish and tore off the last leaf of his clover.

The lady with the eyes of cornflower blue became Raymond's wife. Her youth and her charm filled his home. There was feasting and dancing, hunting and playing, and Raymond was very, very happy. From time to time he planned to send a messenger to his brother and his mother, but something always intervened to stop him, and the seasons passed and the years passed. But one day, to his vast surprise, he realised that the chests of the high hall were empty. In distraction he hastened to Briviesca, the home of one of his habitual guests, a wealthy banker, a descendant of Christian Jews who had taken refuge there at the time of the persecutions. The banker, in return for his signature at the foot of certain papers, found him a large sum of money.

Though Raymond tried to limit his expenses, new difficulties came his way. His journeys to Briviesca became so frequent that his wife, his friends, even his servants, guessed of the troubles that surrounded him. Day by day his friends grew rarer; his wife harsh-tongued, his servants insolent, till at last, in order to satisfy some caprice of his wife, he made one final attempt. Dryly the banker told him that he could give him no more, for there was nothing left to guarantee a further loan. Sick at heart, Raymond returned to his mansion. There was no

[Continued overleaf.]

In answer to his brother, Raymond told his story.



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one waiting in the park to take his horse. He wandered unsteadily through his abandoned home, and on a table in his room found a letter from his wife. He read only the first few words—then, his face in his hands, he wept.

Like a feverish dream all the events of his life sped before Raymond, and he saw that it had been empty, utterly empty, and that in more than twenty years he had not had the time to learn to know his wife, nor those whom he thought his friends. Outside, the shades of night mastered, bit by bit, the immense vault of the sky. And suddenly a darkness blacker than the night closed over Raymond's soul. Reaction was not long in coming. Furiously he searched through the chests, at last found the old clothes that he wore on the day of his arrival, and without one backward glance, as at the time when he left his brother in the meadow at Peñacerrada, he plunged into the night. Taking the same road that he had traversed in the opposite direction twenty-two years ago, Raymond walked on and on, straight before him. Big clouds were racing in disorderly flight across the sky, and in their midst the thin crescent of the moon was like a small, frail ship near to capsizing in a wild sea.

As he crossed a ploughed field, Raymond knocked against a plough. It seemed to him the wing of a gigantic bird, fallen there hurt and soon to die of hunger when once it had devoured the crop. It was not till dawn, which drove off all the spectres of night, that his fancies ceased to torment him. Raymond came to Peñacerrada on a cold bright morning. The church belfry stood out against a smooth blue sky, and the bells ringing a full peal seemed to welcome him home. When he reached the square Raymond's gaze was fixed on the west door of the church, for the folding doors were opened wide and a wedding procession was coming out. In front was a man with clarinet and drum, and behind him came a pair—one a young man with joy shining in his face, and the other a young girl radiant with happiness. Following close behind the newly-married pair came a very old woman, smiling, and leaning on the arm of a man with greying hair.

Raymond stayed motionless, as though rooted to the ground. For that man was his brother Patrice, and the old woman on his arm their mother. With happy cries the procession reached the middle of the square. Patrice and his mother recognised the traveller, opened their arms and covered him with kisses, and took him off to speak with him as though he had left them the day before. In an overflow of gaiety two men fired pistols into the air.

The young bridegroom was Patrice's son. Raymond joined in the wedding feast and sat in the place of honour, between his old mother and his young niece. When evening came and all the young people were dancing, Patrice led his brother away to his bed-room. The little room was as plain and clean as ever, with a chest on which stood an image of the Virgin in a spreading mantle of embroidered velvet, and on a shelf the book of travel stories which Raymond had bought from a pedlar to help dream away the dull winter evenings.

In answer to his brother Raymond told his story. As his tale went on his voice became hoarse, a wild light gleamed in his eyes, and his whole body quivered. Patrice heard him in silence, and then tried to console him. To be happy once again, so he assured him, Raymond need only take up his old place in his old home. But Raymond would not listen. He was sure that peace and happiness were lost to him for ever. The memory of his past life was torment to him, and, worse than that, a settled malice and hatred was in his soul. No, he would not stay, he would go away again, no matter how, no matter where. But before disappearing for ever he must learn what had happened at Peñacerrada while he had been away.

Very simply Patrice told him the story of his life. When he had reached home after Raymond had left him he explained his departure as best he could. And soon his mother and friends saw he did not want to speak, and put him no further questions. Several months later Isabelle was left alone in the world. Patrice married her, and lived happily with his wife and mother. But the following year, just after she had given birth to a boy child, Isabelle was struck with a fever and died in a few hours. It was not till after the death of the woman he loved that Patrice remembered his four-leafed clover, lying in a little box at the bottom of his chest of drawers. In a moment of recklessness he came near to following after Isabelle. But he thought in time; he had a son, in need of him. Only his mother now could help to bring him up. So he wished for a long life for her and tore off the first leaf of his clover.

At the age of four the child was stricken with a dreadful illness, and, when the doctor declared that there was no more hope of saving him, the second clover-leaf was torn off to restore him to health. The child grew up into a hard-working, honourable man, and fell in

love with a fine and lovely girl. But she had money of her own, and, since Patrice was not rich, the girl's parents frowned on this alliance. Meanwhile, the Ordnance College of Segovia contracted for an important wheel-wright's work, which would bring a large sum of money to the successful applicant. Patrice worked hard, tendered for the contract, and journeyed to Segovia. On the day when the applications were opened, his suspense was terrible at the thought of his son awaiting his fate at home, and he tore off the third clover-leaf, which he had brought with him.

While Patrice spoke his face darkened, and often small tears shone at the corners of his eyes. But he mastered his emotion, and assured Raymond that if he returned to his home he would quickly recover contentment and peace. Raymond shook his head in despondency. What his brother said was impossible. His memories were torture to him, and he had, too, that bitterness of soul which made him hate all people and all things.

When he heard these words Patrice's glance lit up with a spark of joy. "If it is no more than that," he said, rising, "we will yet spend long evenings together round the hearth, and you will be happy." He took out a little box from the chest, and, showing his brother

what was left of his clover, he tore off its last leaf. . . . Between his fingers the little stalk quickly crumbled to dust. . . .

For the first time for many days Raymond's set face relaxed; he lifted his head, till then bowed down with heavy thoughts, and felt a great peace steal over him. Shaking his brother's hands, he said: "Patrice, thank you, thank you for what you have just done for me. Thanks to the clover that you gave me, I have lived, evilly no doubt, but I have lived intensely, I have loved, and I have suffered. Thanks to you too, the bitter memory of my joys and sorrows will be painful to me no more. But you, brother, what good have you had from your four-leafed clover?"

Patrice looked at Raymond for a long time. "Do not pity me," he answered. "It is true I have not lived in the way you mean. I have not loved like you—God did not permit it—but I think I have given my son happiness in enabling him to fulfil his dream. And if I have not suffered, which is by no means certain, yet by me great sufferings have been ended. Besides, I have had the fortune, the matchless good fortune, to give to others a thing which I, perhaps, have never had."

Raymond lowered his head a moment. Then, with tears in his eyes, he fell on Patrice's neck. And he never dared to ask what was that thing which his brother had had the fortune to give to others, but which he himself, perhaps, had never had.

[THE END.]



The alcaid and an old man settled themselves to discuss the shots and count the points.

"Say when, man!!"



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HE butler presented a card on a silver salver. Mr. Cornelius A. Blenck, disturbed in an after-lunch doze, opened one eye sleepily, glanced at the name, and instantly became fully conscious.

"Show him in, Bates; show him in."

He jumped briskly to his feet, pulled his waistcoat down over his rotund little stomach, and trotted eagerly across the room. Turning the key in one of the cabinets lining the walls, he flung wide its glass doors. From a switch he illuminated the interior. The light gleamed softly on exquisite Chinese porcelain, each piece arranged with meticulous care, of selected size and colour, on its velvet-covered shelf.

The little man surveyed the dazzling group with loving pride. His eyes ran over each work of art in turn, and came to rest in adoration before the centre piece.

The dealer's heavy breathing in his ear roused him from his absorption.

"My word, Mr. Blenck!" Incredulity, admiration, and envy were all expressed. "Wherever did you find it?"

The millionaire turned quickly. Emotion was rare with Heckman. But the other's face was coldly non-committal, as usual.

"Ah! I thought that would give you a thrill!" He laughed, admiring the quick control, the impassive professional mask.

"Genuine?"

"Undoubtedly."

Heckman licked his handkerchief and rubbed a little of the coated grime off the precious jar. Removing the lid he tilted it towards the light and focussed his lens on to the perfect glaze.

"Careful! Careful, Heckman!" The collector hopped round him in tremulous excitement, fearful of the safety of his treasure, as a mother might be in witnessing the careless handling of her first-born.

"Famille Verte, seventeenth century."

"Kang-He period."

"A magnificent piece."

"Very rare."

"The panels are unusual."

"The seeded green—what a marvellous colour!"

Those slightly interlaced panels—very rare—a pair of lidded Kang-He jars—a vague memory disturbed Heckman's mind, connected somehow in a remote region of his brain with something discreditable—some act of treachery. But then such acts had starred his career. He did not find his conscience troublesome. . . . But where? Where? . . . How tricky a thing memory was! Elusive wandering thoughts of a more or less obliterated past pricking the present with sharp high-lights, fading out again. . . . Kang-He jars. No, it had gone again, that sharp, stinging, sudden flash of memory. . . .

The men's faces were close together. One benign, gentle, uncreased; the other seamed and scarred, heavy with flabby fat. Their hands



Heckman licked his handkerchief and rubbed a little of the coated grime off the precious jar.

met as they pointed out freshly-discovered beauty in line and colour. Soap and water made incredible revealments. Small ethereal hands with pointed, delicate finger-tips. Gross thick, white hands, blunted, coarse, insensitive. . . . Personalities utterly dissimilar, drawn into sympathy and mutual understanding by the shared passion for the art of bygone centuries.

The washing finished, Mr. Blenck stepped back and critically and calmly surveyed his treasure.

"I'm not a greedy man, Heckman, but there's something wanting about that jar."

"Something wanting?" The dealer stared. "Why, it's unique!"

"Yes! But it shouldn't be! It shouldn't be! Now you, with all your experience, must surely realise that."

"You mean—"

"That somewhere in the world exists its counterpart, its twin; equally perfect, equally beautiful."

"Originally a pair?"

"Exactly."

"By God! You're right, Mr. Blenck . . . a pair." Again that curious twinge of memory. . . . "Why, as a pair they'd be priceless. A perfectly matched—Where did you find this one?"

"You'll never guess. Out in the open, on a stall, in a certain market not a hundred miles from here—"

"Never!"

"—under a heap of rubbish."

"Nonsense!"

"Like a fairy story. Nevertheless, it's true. The question is: Where is the other?"

"Ah! Where indeed?"

Mr. Blenck drew a cigar-case from his pocket and held it out to his visitor. Making a careful selection from the contents for himself, he bit off the end and struck a match.

"Now, Heckman, I didn't ask you to come here merely to make you jealous. I've set my heart on possessing both those jars. Set my heart, mind you. You know what that means. I'm a rich man. I can afford to indulge my whims. And I am, I believe, also a generous man. I give you *carte blanche*. Spend what you like. Charge me what you like. I shan't grumble. Even if it takes you years, find me the pair to that Kang-He jar."

As he spoke he moved two vases from their places on the middle shelf of the cabinet and set them carefully on a lower one. "Will you please lift the jar here?" He pointed to the space vacated on the right side.

Heckman lifted the jar and carried it to the cabinet. He thought: "I have done this before. How strange! Held this jar in my arms, carried it somewhere." Easily explained, Science has said. The right lobe of the brain functioning out of time with the left lobe; that sensation of repetition. . . . But Heckman said: "I wonder . . ."

"Now, this space on the left," Mr. Blenck went on, "shall remain empty. Until when? That entirely depends on you, Heckman. Don't let my cabinet remain lop-sided for too long!"

The dealer walked slowly down the steps of the great house. Money for nothing—he thought—if I can only remember.

As he turned into Piccadilly a woman absent-mindedly jostled him, preoccupied, pinning a bunch of violets to her coat. She looked up and smiled an apology. Under her hat he caught a glimpse of ash-blond hair, clear grey eyes wide apart. He stopped and stared after her as she passed. . . . Ash-blond hair—Chinese jars—coming and going again, that queer stab of memory, reawakened by a fleeting vision in the street.

After that moment by no effort of will could he ever recapture that faint, elusive half-recollection, that curious sense of knowledge once possessed.

After months of wasted time and money, fruitless combings of likely markets, hours of poring over catalogues, days spent in ingratiating, leading up, with appreciative flattery, to an



"Alison!" She put her hand to her throat with an oddly familiar gesture of terror.

invitation to inspect private collections, he confessed his failure to the millionaire.

"No hurry, no hurry, Heckman. I can wait. I don't mind what you spend. It will turn up some day. You've lots more important business on hand, I know; let it slide."

But in the press of business, the rush and turmoil of his journeyings through Europe or America, just below the surface of his consciousness lay the urge of memory. Ash-blonde hair, Chinese jars. . . . The words beat in his head with a seemingly fatal rhythm. It was as though destiny in the shape of Mr. Blenck were forcing on him this miraculous quest, for only a miracle now, he felt, could place that missing jar in the collector's cabinet.

But miracles happen. At least to our imperfect vision they appear as such. Kaleidoscopic scraps of disconnected colour falling with fatal precision at some given moment into geometrical pattern. The submerged, secretive warp reappearing, finding its way to the surface again, sure and steady, primed with deep-rooted causal purpose, pursuing its relentless design, its ultimate plan.

There was a summer evening when Heckman walked out to dine. The London season was over. The streets had a stale smell. There was a curious tension in the over-breathed air. In the West the sun left a blood-red trail of furious glory. The lights pricked out the dusty twilight one by one. A newsboy passed him, shouting. His strident voice cut through the stagnant air in shrill staccato, leaving a nervous, jangling echo in the emptying streets.

"Murder of an Archduke! Pi — per!"

Heckman bought a paper and stood under a lamp to glance at the late news.

A woman brushed against him, touching his arm lightly as she passed, turned to look at him with a set smile of alluring invitation. . . . Her chalky face had a ghostly look in the cold lamp-light, her mouth was a gash of vivid crimson, her eyes veiled with smears of smoky black. Under the upturned brim of her hat, her ash-blonde hair swept from her wide forehead.

Irritably he shook off the detaining hand, looked up—

"Alison!"

She put her hand to her throat with an oddly familiar gesture of terror. Panic flared into her eyes. He dropped his quickly before her frozen stare of recognition. Memory came surging back. The deliberately locked door fell open. . . . He tried to stop her as she fled past him, disappearing like a shadow into the murk of the street. A strange excitement seized him. It was all he could do to stop himself crying after her: "Where is the jar? What have you done with the other jar?"

Shocked as he was by the sudden encounter, by her dreadful predilection, it was typical of Heckman to subordinate the human element, skim over the part she had played in his life, concentrate only on remembering the episode in which he was for the moment most vitally interested. Clearly if all came back to him. He remembered the day he had given her the vases. To his youthful, uneducated eyes just a pair of decorative Chinese jars, picked up somewhere by chance for a trifling. They had not impressed her very much. She had hardly glanced at them. Vaguely he remembered a terrible emotional scene, a tortured, terror-stricken face, tears of agonised entreaty. More vaguely still, his cold repudiation of her claim. . . .

To think that he had once possessed those priceless jars and never known it! Education! That was the most important thing in life! Education at any cost. To have the grit and determination to kick down obstacles. Through sheer brutal courage to succeed. Progression! Well, he had succeeded beyond his wildest dreams. His achievement was self-won. He boasted of his unaided climb from the lowest rung to the proud position, in his specialised knowledge, of being the most consulted man in Europe. Now, through a mere fluke, he was perhaps

about to add to his triumphs . . . incidentally to put a fortune in his pocket. . . .

In the night he woke, thinking of two green jars with lidded tops. Try as he would, he could not recall their shape or pattern. . . . Instead, a woman's face stared at him through the darkness. . . . A grave, white face, with tortured, lack-lustre eyes, on which, like a grotesque mask, an obscene grin was painted; smirking, vermillion mouth, and blackened lids drawn up at the corners . . . inviting, beseeching, yet cold with a deadly menace. . . .

He had some difficulty in tracing her. Alison Warner, as Alison Warner, did not exist in the underworld. In the end, through his trained persistence, he ran her to ground in a dingy tenement flat, read on a card in its grimy stone-flagged entrance-hall as much of her name as she thought fit to keep.

He climbed the four flights with jaunty self-assurance. A little over-acted, a little forced. When she opened the door, his eyes swept the ill-kept, sordid little room, swiftly took in one salient feature of its decoration. . . . He breathed a sigh of relief. . . .

Heckman prided himself on his *savoir-faire* and his knowledge of women. He had formulated no plan, had not made up his mind as to what overtur would meet the occasion.

He had tackled more difficult situations than this; but her unruffled calm, her silence, disarmed him. He had expected some display of emotion, tears perhaps; he was even prepared for a little recrimination. Hadn't he heard it said that a woman always remains in love with her first lover? . . . Can never forget. . . . He lost his nerve for a moment, stammered. . . . Her eyes held always that polite interrogation. He went to the window where the jar stood, fingered it with his gross hands with their thick phalanges, took off the lid, peered down into the interior—peered again into a heap of gold and silver.

"My earnings," she said ironically.

His hand shook as he replaced it.

"Was this necessary?"

"It's necessary, I suppose, to eat."

"There's work—it's easy."

"Is it?" she said scornfully. "Try it! A child complicates things."

"A child! You never told me—I never knew. . . ."

"You didn't wait to hear! What have you come here for?"

He found the interview intolerable; said brutally, "I want that jar. You can name your own price."

Her eyes narrowed.

"It's not for sale."

"You don't understand me," he repeated. "I said, you can name your own price."

She held the door open—said simply: "Please go!"

"Alison," he temporised, unsure of his ground.

"Get out!"

She slammed the door behind him. Outside he cursed himself for his blundering folly, his lack of tact.

In the street excited crowds pushed by him, gesticulating, shouting. A newsboy thrust a poster into his face. "England declares war!" Intermingled shrill and raucous voices pierced and stabbed the heavy air. He pushed his way through the seething streets, swearing savagely under his breath. . . . War! War! What do I care for the damned war! . . .

He left her alone for a time, went twice again at lengthy intervals. There was no response to his repeated ringing. At his third effort a charwoman with a bunch of keys at her waist opened the door for him, assured him Miss Alison would soon be home . . . thrust him unwillingly into the stuffy little room. He gazed about it, depressed and horrified at its utter lack of charm or homeliness. A dead, soulless room, hideous with its jumble of chairs and tables—flung anyhow—a lost, unhappy room.

He caught the sound of voices in the adjoining room, a man's deep tones—a sneer contorted his face. The door opened. A boy in khaki

[Continued overleaf]



Heckman thrust his great bulk through the doorway, stood with his back against it, and turned the key in the lock.

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uniform came out quickly, stood staring at him. Alison's eyes and broad white forehead, thick line of jaw and hard-cut, heavy mouth—not Alison's. Heckman's heart contracted suddenly with an utterly new emotion. Impulsively he put out his hand, let it fall inertly to his side. For one brief moment their lives touched—broke apart again. The front door slammed. He saw Alison come into the doorway, her white, unpainted face haggard, her eyes blind with unshed tears; watched her as she stood listening to the footsteps running down the stone stairs . . . their last echo gone, heard her turn the key of the bed-room door. . . .

Fate, as if weary of her own laggard methods, now took a hand, and hustled things up a bit.

Mr. Blenck rang the bell on his desk for his secretary.

"Those proofs in yet, Miles? The Ming collection catalogue."

"No, Sir. They were promised the day before yesterday. I'll ring up."

"Don't trouble. I'm going that way. I'll call."

As the lift shot up to the third floor of the printing-house, Mr. Blenck's ever-observant eyes were attracted through the great windows across the narrow street to the window of a house opposite. The attendant threw open the steel doors, but Mr. Blenck, his back turned, still stared abstractedly and made no effort to disembark. This same attendant, during the dinner hour, related a strange and exciting story of a rotund little gentleman, obviously a German spy, who, on being returned once to the ground floor, had reappeared shortly afterwards armed with a pair of powerful Zeiss glasses and, demanding a repetition ascent, had proceeded to focus these glasses on the windows of a house across the street, remaining in this position for quite twenty minutes.

Mr. Blenck stood outside the door of Miss Alison's flat. The poverty-stricken and unalluring atmosphere of the place reassured him. Complacently he felt his cheque-book's bulk in his pocket. Money, he thought, would be more appreciated here than Chinese porcelain. Full of eager anticipation as he was, he felt a little shy and embarrassed. This daring unconventionality was distasteful to him. For nothing else but the coveted possession of the second Kang-He jar would he have gone to such lengths. Rehearsing courteous and humble excuses for his quite unwarrantable and most impudent intrusion, he absent-mindedly turned the door-handle. . . .

It occurred to him at that moment that he had never before seen such an utterly tragic representation of human despair and hopeless misery. Her eyes, like the eyes of some creature dealt a death-wound, stared vacantly. Her hands wove backwards and forwards over a creased paper on the table before her. He thought: "She has been sitting like that all night. She has got to the end of everything. I'm glad I came. Somebody had to come. Oh God! This futile agony of war! The wounds it deals. The naked, unguarded vulnerability of the heart that loves. . . ."

He questioned gently: "A relative?"

Her dry lips repeated, mumbling: "A relative."

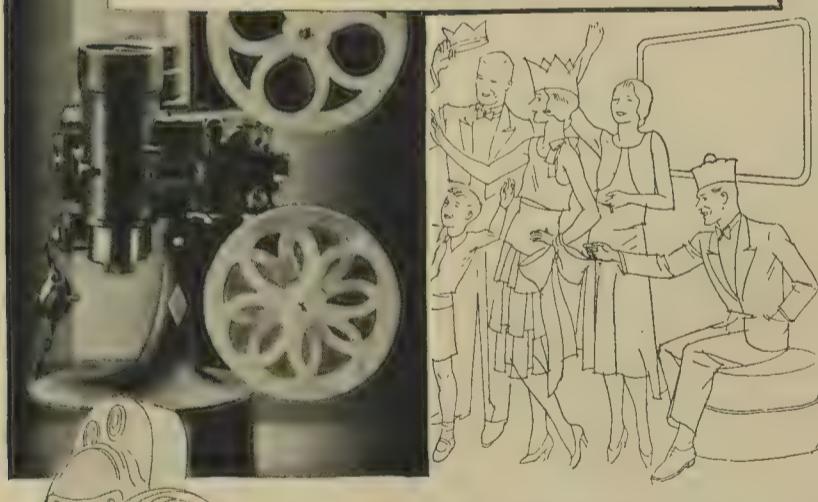
He got her food and drink, chafed her cold hands, smoothed back her tumbled hair. Soothed and comforted, calmed and reassured her. Looked round the horrible room, read nothing in it but a weary hatred of life, a surrendering, a lost battle against a cruel fate.

Mr. Blenck had all his life collected beautiful things, but women were quite out of his province. Save for an unfulfilled romantic passion of [Continued overleaf.]



Her hands wove backwards and forwards over a creased paper on the table before her.

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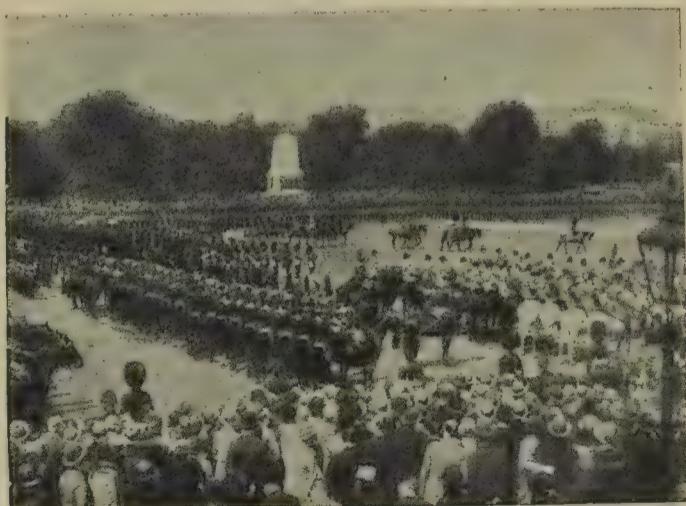
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An utterly delightful lace Evening Gown, very full as to skirt, with berthe in net and lace applique. In black, brown, green, and becoming shades. **7½ GNS.**

An Evening Gown in Romaine with new movement in the bodice peculiarly noticeable in novel adaptation of the scarf idea. In black, blue, brown, green, and other **9½ GNS.** shades.

A Day Gown in Marocaine with deep rolled collar inset with vest of contrasting shade. Admirable for full figures. In the attractive **10½ GNS.** winter shades.

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(Model Gown Department.)

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VERE STREET AND OXFORD STREET, W.1

his youth he was quite without experience, but he had a *flair* for the genuine. Neither in art nor human nature had he ever been deceived. His judgment was unerring. His vision sensed this woman's desperate need of help and protection. Sympathy flared to a sudden friendship, broke down the reserves of her natural mistrust. It did not dawn on the collector until he reached home again that he had quite forgotten to look at the Kang-He jar.

When he saw her again, he told her of his original mission, verified the similarity of the rare interlaced panels, ran his thin fingers lovingly over the exquisite green glaze, lifted the lid, peered inside.

"My—savings." Her voice had a nervous tremor. Crimson flooded her white cheeks.

He replaced it reverently.

"Take it!" she said. "I want you to have it. I want to give it you."

It took him all the rest of the year to persuade her that doubly she might bestow a gift. He said: "I am an old man, my life is nearly over; but I can give you safety, the protection of my name."

Each morning when she woke she vowed that she would tell him. Each day she said: "It will be to-day that I shall see that blank look on his face, the look a child might give when it is struck." Each night she said: "I shall never, never tell him. I couldn't bear that he should ever look at me like that."

Life has a curious way of stage-managing her dramas.

It so happened that, on the very day she recklessly consented, flung out a last desperate challenge to Fate, Heckman followed her up the stairs, pushed her roughly aside, thrust his great bulk through the doorway, stood with his back against it, and turned the key in the lock. All idea of finesse had left him. The veneer of education fell off him like a sloughed skin. He faced her, just the primitive bully that he was.

She thought: "How could I ever have loved him? Was he always like this? Or is this what success has made him? Has he really learned anything in all these years of effort? Have I learned more than he has in the gutter?"

He drew a bundle of bank-notes from his pocket, threw them on the table. . . . Swiftly she manoeuvred herself between him and the Kang-He jar, spread out her arms with a protecting gesture. Said with quiet precision: "You're too late. It isn't mine any longer."

He caught her savagely by the arm, twisting it till the bones creaked. She smiled at him scornfully. It flashed through her mind: "After to-morrow I shall be safe inside those doors. Unless I choose, I need never come out of them any more. No man can ever, ever touch me again. . . ."

He forced the truth from her. Dropped her arm carelessly.

"Oh, no!" he said. "Oh, no!"—and laughed. She followed him to the door. Watched him as he opened it. "Where are you going?" she asked fearfully. His eyes mocked her. Ferocious, menacing eyes. "I'm going to tell him." She clutched at his coat in terror. "You couldn't—you couldn't!"

"Well, wait and see!"

Panic seized her. Her body shook with ague, her teeth chattered. She heard his footsteps running down the stairs. She felt like a cornered animal, fast in a trap, no way out whichever way she moved. The vision of a gentle face swam before her, unreproachful, uncondemning, but veiled with a melancholy sadness. . . . "If only you had told me yourself," it seemed to say. She saw the shadow rising between them, poisoning their lives. . . . the wounding silence more deadly than confession. . . . the empty vanity of her poor desire to give back gold for gold. . . .

She grasped the heavy jar in her arms, ran to the top of the staircase. . . . irresolutely stood there. . . . her mind dully conscious of the urgent necessity for compromise. . . . keep him she must until her brain grew steady again. . . . Temporise anyhow. . . . gain time to think. . . .

She balanced the jar on the baluster, peered down through the murky half-light of the staircase-well into the shadowy space beneath. She heard his footsteps ring on the last step. . . . Already he was crossing the hall. . . . Softly she called his name. A whispering echo swept about her, washing back from wall to wall. . . . She felt herself drowning in a sea of subdued sound. . . .

He looked up and saw her silhouetted against the streaming light from the opened door. . . . her blurred outline luminous, her hair like a misty aureole about her drawn face, the jar perilously poised on the iron rail. . . . She looked down into his upturned face. Disembodied, and like some grotesque balloon, it seemed to float up out of the gloomy pit below. Monstrous, misshapen, sinister, it swam up until, to her tortured nerves, it seemed to touch her, recede again. . . . She saw its threat following her down the years, dogging her footsteps, never letting her escape. . . .

Seized with wild, unreasoning terror, she lifted the jar high in her arms, hurled it with frenzied force into the upturned face. She heard the crash of the china as it shivered to a thousand pieces. . . . the thundering impact of a falling body. . . . the tinkle of the spilled coins. . . . spinning, rotating, hitting against the wall. . . . rolling back again. . . . then a grim silence, charged with portentous meaning. . . . On the landing above she heard a door open. A bolt of light shot out. . . . footsteps came running swiftly down the stairs. . . .

[THE END.]

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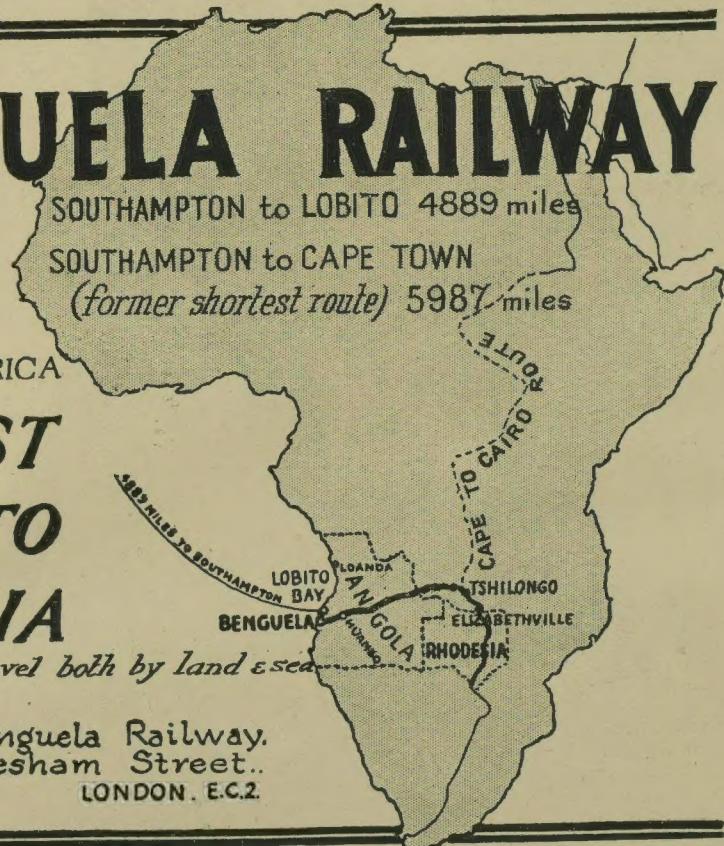
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